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THE CHIMERICAL SCHEME OF CEDING WEST FLORIDA

by

Jerrell H. Shofner

Comprising a geographically homogenous region, Alabama and West Florida were bound by cultural and economic ties long before the eastern and western sections of the southernmost state began to feel a common identity.¹ For centuries before diplomatic expediency and historical accident established the 31st parallel as the political boundary separating Alabama and Florida, the two areas had a common human history. Indians moved along the waterways between interior Alabama and the coast before and during the long period when the region was claimed successively by Spain, Britain, and the United States. British traders operated freely across the 31st parallel when Florida belonged to Spain and Alabama was already part of the United States. After the foreign powers withdrew and the Indians were relentlessly driven out, settlers continued to trade, visit, and intermarry across the line. During the 1861 secession crisis, when state loyalties were at their zenith, Alabamians and West Floridians crossed the state boundary to join units composed of men they considered their neighbors even though it meant serving in the military forces of another state.² Economic ties between Pensacola and central Alabama became increasingly important as the two states developed.

Everyone recognized that the 31st parallel became the Alabama-Florida boundary through diplomatic necessities. For a long time afterward many interested observers believed that the line would be corrected to reflect a more reasonable political division. One of the most persistent issues in the affairs of the two states has been the recurring desire to annex West Florida to Alabama. Nine times during the 150 years since Florida was acquired by the United States there have been attempts with varying degrees of popular support to make the

¹John Lee Williams, *A View of West Florida* (Philadelphia, 1827).

²Record of the Simpson Mounted Rangers (Company E, 15th Confederate Cavalry), Conecuh County Letters, 1961-66, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

change. East Floridians have often been as anxious to see the west go as Alabamians have been to receive the additional territory. West Floridians, although at times divided, have generally favored the change. Yet all nine annexation movements failed. Only one reached the stage of serious negotiations and there is compelling evidence that even then the Florida governor was using the issue as a threat to obtain passage of other legislation.

Disputes over boundaries between the American states have been quite common. Since eleven of the thirteen original states were in contention over boundaries when the constitutional convention met in 1787, the framers empowered the national courts to settle "controversies between two or more states."³ In deciding numerous disagreements over boundaries the Supreme Court established a body of law which clearly supported the principle that one state might cede part of its territory to another. The only limitation is the constitutional requirement that interstate compacts must be approved by Congress. However, except for the transfer of part of Virginia to West Virginia under extraordinary circumstances, no state has agreed to cede part of its territory to another. Alabama is the only state ever to offer another money for part of its domain.

Although they exerted considerable energy to transfer West Florida to Alabama, most proponents of the several annexation schemes admitted that the boundary change would have been far more likely before Florida became a state and its people developed a common history and tradition. But diplomatic exigencies and chance often had more to do with United States acquisition of the Gulf Coastal region than considerations of geographical and social homogeneity of the states established there.⁴ When territorial governments were established they naturally conformed to national boundaries of the moment. After 1795 the United States possessed all the territory north of the 31st parallel and east of the Mississippi River. The area became the Mississippi Territory by a Congressional enactment

³*United States Constitution*, Article III, Section 2.

⁴*Acts of Alabama*, 1963, Regular Session, 1026-27.

of 1798. Georgia ceded her claims to it in 1802.⁵

Because all the rivers of the territory flowed through West Florida to the Gulf, President Thomas Jefferson believed that acquisition of the land south of the 31st parallel was essential to the national interest. Efforts to purchase West Florida or the land which controlled the Mississippi River's outlet to the Gulf resulted in the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Extensive negotiations over the next several years failed to obtain agreement from France and Spain that West Florida had been included in the purchase. President James Madison finally seized all the land between the Mississippi River and the Perdido River, claiming that it had been included in the Louisiana Purchase Treaty of 1803. In 1812 it was added to the Mississippi Territory.⁶ During the next several years, residents of the eastern part of the Territory, which later became Alabama, had their hands full in averting a move to include them in a single state of Mississippi. When Mississippi was finally admitted in 1817, the area comprising present-day Alabama was detached and made a separate territory. With about seventy miles of seacoast on the western side, its only major egress to the sea was through Mobile Bay. The territory was landlocked from the Perdido River to its eastern boundary on the Chattahoochee.

Between the Perdido on the west and the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola on the east the land south of the 31st parallel comprises the area which has since been known as West Florida, a much smaller territory than that known earlier by the same name. The 10,000 square mile area, still in Spanish possession in 1817, was desired by Alabamians to give them a longer seacoast and the excellent Pensacola harbor. While the United States government was still negotiating with Spain for the

⁵Malcolm Cook McMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama, 1798-1901: A Study in Politics, the Negro, and Sectionalism* (Chapel Hill, 1955), 3; Francis G. Caffey, "The Annexation of West Florida to Alabama," *Proceedings of the Alabama State Bar Association*, (1901), 108.

⁶Isaac J. Cox, *The West Florida Controversy, 1789-1813* (Baltimore, 1918), 335; Hubert Bruce Fuller, *The Purchase of Florida: Its History and Diplomacy* (Gainesville, 1964), 184.

Florida territory and General Andrew Jackson's invasions were demonstrating its vulnerability, Alabama became a state in 1819.⁷ Unable to press a claim to West Florida at the time because it still belonged to a foreign power, the Alabama constitutional convention served notice of its desire for the territory and provided for future acquisition. On July 30, 1819, the convention transmitted a memorial to Congress asking "that if the treaty with Spain, . . . shall be ratified by the Spanish government—so much of the Territory . . . as lies West of the Apalachicola river, may be annexed to the State of Alabama."⁸

The convention also included in Alabama's fundamental law a delineation of the state's boundaries "subject to such enlargement as may be made by law in consequence of any cession of territory by the United States, or either of them."⁹ All subsequent constitutions of the state retained the provision.¹⁰ When the Adams-Onís Treaty was finally ratified in 1821, Florida became a single territory with boundaries which have since remained unchanged west of the Apalachicola River.

Until Alabama was admitted to statehood and Florida became a United States territory, advocates of annexation had no opportunity to concentrate on that goal. From that time on the annexation procedure became increasingly complex as the matter became embroiled in other problems confronting the nation, the state of Alabama, and the Territory of Florida. But citizens on both sides of the 31st parallel continued to strive for the change.

United States Senator John W. Walker was the leading

⁷Cox, *West Florida Controversy*, 655.

⁸Charles Tait to John W. Walker, November 16, 1821, John W. Walker Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History; Clarence E. Carter, *The Territorial Papers of the United States* (Washington, 1954), XVIII, 664-66; *Journal of the Convention of the Alabama Territory begun July 5, 1819*, reprinted in *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, XXXI (1969), 57, 87.

⁹*Constitution of the State of Alabama of 1819*, Preamble.

¹⁰Caffey, "Annexation of West Florida, 109-110; Thomas M. Owen, *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography*, II (Chicago, 1921), 1392; Hugh C. Bailey, "Alabama Political Leaders and the Acquisition of Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXV (1956), 26-27.

advocate of annexation in Alabama. He argued that Pensacola "must become" the main seaport for at least southeastern Alabama. Unless the transfer was made, two-thirds of the state would be landlocked by a strip of pine barrens fifty miles wide between the 31st parallel and the coast.¹¹ In 1821 the Alabama legislature petitioned its Congressional delegation to work for annexation of West Florida.¹² When Congress took up legislation to establish a territorial government in Florida, Senator Walker offered an amendment from the floor which would have provided for attaching West Florida to Alabama. But with the Missouri Compromise so recently settled, Walker's amendment was defeated 25 to 19, with only three Southerners joining the Alabamian in voting for it. Peninsular Florida was known as a comparatively useless strip of sand which would not support a large population. Southern Senators, wishing to see Florida populated and admitted as a slave state, were reluctant to split the territory into two parts and have one of them joined to an established state while the other remained in territorial status because its population was too small for statehood. Senator Walker's 1822 efforts toward annexation failed for lack of support from his Southern colleagues, but he believed they would agree with him as soon as they realized that the peninsula would attract enough settlers to become a state.¹³ The *Mobile Register* argued that East and West Florida had nothing in common and "separation must come sooner or later and the sooner the better."¹⁴ A Pensacola citizen reported that people in his city were in favor of annexation and he stood ready to launch a petition campaign from West Florida when Walker asked for it.¹⁵

Early sectional divisions in the Florida territory encouraged annexation sentiment. Having been divided under both Spanish

¹¹Bailey, "Alabama Political Leaders," 27.

¹²Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXII, 307-308.

¹³John W. Walker to Charles Tait, 19 March, 1822, Charles Tait Papers, Alabama Department of Archives and History; United States, *Senate Journal*, 17th Cong., 1st Sess., 275-76; Bailey, "Alabama Political Leaders," 28-29.

¹⁴*Pensacola Floridian*, March 8, 1823.

¹⁵J. H. Chaplin to John Walker, July 13, 1822, Walker Papers; Hugh C. Bailey, *John Williams Walker* (Tuscaloosa, 1964), 134-35.

and English rule, people in the territory were accustomed to the idea of two Floridas. Some even argued that the Adams-Onís Treaty obligated the United States to form two states from the territory. There was serious rivalry between East and West Florida over the location of the capital. St. Augustine on the east coast and Pensacola in the extreme western portion of the territory had been the population and governing centers of East and West Florida respectively. Separated by 400 miles of rarely travelled terrain, each town was anxious to become the territorial capital. St. Augustine citizens were angered when Andrew Jackson set up territorial government at Pensacola and established only a branch in their city. There was further resentment when the first legislative council met in Pensacola. It was this reaction more than the devastating yellow fever epidemic which swept Pensacola and drove the legislators out of town that caused the second session to be held in St. Augustine.

Transportation difficulties as well as sectional rivalry resulted in the capital being located mid-way between the older towns at Tallahassee. That compromise caused a new sectional force to develop and provide the major bulwark against all future efforts to annex West Florida to Alabama. At a time when cotton cultivation was becoming the major economic pursuit in the Southern United States, Tallahassee was located in an unsettled area where the climate and soil were ideally suited to that purpose. Because the value of the less tangible natural resources of East and West Florida were not recognized until much later, Middle Florida was settled more rapidly than they and became the dominant section in territorial Florida politics. It often balanced the other two sections against each other.

While Middle Floridians consistently opposed cession of the west to Alabama, East Florida adamantly insisted on separation of the territory at the Suwannee River. While its citizens were quite willing for West Florida to join Alabama they were just as anxious for the territory to be divided under two separate governments. In November, 1822, and again in January, 1823, St. Augustinians petitioned Congress to divide the territory.¹⁰ They argued that West Florida would retard the development of

¹⁰St. Augustine News, June 19, 1840.

the east and that Alabama would benefit from the acquisition of the western panhandle.¹⁷ But as long as the Suwannee River became their western boundary, East Floridians were not seriously concerned with the ultimate disposition of the west.

West Floridians were somewhat divided over the issue. The older residents of Pensacola, many of whom were of Spanish descent, preferred to remain with Florida. Most of the newer residents wanted to join Alabama.¹⁸ Advocates of annexation argued that similar climate and geography gave West Florida and Southern Alabama a common agricultural interest, Alabama rivers flowed to the sea through West Florida, and Florida coastal towns were trading centers for interior Alabama.¹⁹ In 1826 a group of West Floridians petitioned Alabama Governor John Murphy for assistance in annexing their section to his state. Expressing enthusiasm for the idea, Murphy told the legislature that annexation would favor West Florida, Alabama and the Union. If Florida were to continue as a territory, he said, there was no reason against annexation. If it were made into a state, "this portion, important to us only, must always be weak, and wanting in intimate connection with the rest [of Florida]"²⁰ The economic affinity of the two regions was emphasized by Florida Territorial Delegate Joseph M. White's 1826 proposal that the United States Navy open a waterway between Pensacola and the Mobile River. He thought a six mile canal would make Pensacola's harbor accessible to much of interior Alabama.²¹ After 1826 little more was said about annexation or division of the territory until Floridians began seriously considering statehood in the late 1830s.

As the likelihood of statehood for Florida increased, Alabama reiterated her continuing interest in annexation of the western portion of the territory. In December 1837, the Alabama legislature petitioned its Congressmen to "use all proper means" to bring about the change.²² In reporting the Alabama

¹⁷St. Augustine *East Florida Herald*, April 12, 1823.

¹⁸Sidney Walter Martin, *Florida During the Territorial Days* (Athens, 1944), 261.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 260.

²⁰Alabama, *Senate Journal*, 1826, 10.

²¹Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXIII, 360.

²²*Acts of Alabama*, 1837, 128.

request to the Legislative Council, Territorial Governor Richard Keith Call of Tallahassee declared it "no less unexpected than extra ordinary" and warned of its "most fatal consequences to the present and future prospects of Florida."²³ The Council, dominated by Middle Florida interests, appointed a committee to consider the matter. It reported Alabama's request as "extra ordinary ill-timed and injudicious, . . ."²⁴ But St. Augustinians intensified their demands for separation of the territory at the Suwannee River. Complaining that government of Florida as a single territory had been "most peculiarly harrassing and vexatious" to East Floridians who were outnumbered by Middle and West Florida "with which [they] had no association or business connexion," St. Augustine petitioners for separation declared that "nature never intended that East Florida should be formed into a state with Middle and West Florida."²⁵ They also felt that St. Augustine would become the capital of a territory whose western boundary was the Suwannee River.²⁶

With East Floridians clamoring for separation and opposing statehood as unnecessarily expensive, the Middle Florida dominated Legislative Council called for a constitutional convention. To avoid offending the proponents of St. Augustine, Pensacola, or Tallahassee any more than necessary, the Council selected St. Joseph on the Gulf Coast as the convention site.²⁷ Although St. Augustine voters rejected the constitution by a ten to one majority, it was ratified by the narrow majority of 2070 to 1975 by all the voters of the territory.²⁸ During the next two years Congress was flooded with petitions from Florida; those from the Middle and West favoring admission as a single state and the East demanding division.

By early 1840 it seemed that the East Floridians were likely to win the struggle. To avoid the possibility of being left out of the Union for a lengthy period, West Floridians

²³Florida, *Legislative Council Journal*, 1838, 74.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 120; Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXIII, 472n.

²⁵Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XXIII, 470-71; Martin, *Territorial Days*, 262.

²⁶Arthur W. Thompson, *Jacksonian Democracy on the Florida Frontier* (Gainesville, 1961), 36.

²⁷Martin, *Territorial Days*, 266.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 272.

revived their interest in annexation to Alabama. A Pensacola citizens' meeting in May, 1840, petitioned Congress to make the change. Noting that Alabama rivers flowed through West Florida, that union of the area with Alabama would be in accord with the Adams-Onís Treaty, and that industrial development would be promoted, the petitioners emphasized that such a change would "solve a long controversy" by allowing East Florida to enter the Union as a single state.²⁹

East Floridians hoped that Southern desires to increase the number of slave states might bring about a division of the territory by Congress. A bill was introduced in 1840 which would have divided the territory, but after a long debate it was defeated.³⁰ The balance of free and slave states had been so carefully preserved since the Missouri Compromise that Congress was unwilling to admit even one Florida until another free territory was prepared for statehood. Finally, on February 10, 1845, a bill to admit Florida and Iowa was introduced. A provision that the former might be divided by its own legislature after it became a state was included in the original bill, but was deleted almost as soon as debate on the measure began.³¹ Florida was admitted as a single state on March 3, 1845. In the election for state offices, the Democratic party, which had favored statehood, made a clean sweep. David L. Yulee, an East Floridian, who had argued effectively for admission despite numerous petitions from his St. Augustine neighbors, was elected to the United States Senate. Yulee and others who had argued for admission of Florida as a single state believed that statehood would engender a feeling of state identity among all its citizens and enable them to develop a transportation system binding the far-flung section together. Statehood also made annexation of West Florida to Alabama a much more difficult undertaking than it would have been before 1845. Since Florida followed the common practice of including a definition of its boundaries in the state constitution, any future cession of

²⁹*Ibid.*, 265.

³⁰*Congressional Globe*, 26th Cong., 1st Sess., 239, 547.

³¹United States, *House Report No. 577*, 28th Cong., 1st Sess., 3-4; Dorothy Dodd, *Florida Becomes a State* (Tallahassee, 1945), 419-20; Martin, *Territorial Days*, 276-77.

territory would require an amendment to be ratified by all the voters of the state. The question of dividing Florida into two states or annexing part of it to Alabama seemed to have been settled.

In 1853, while Yulee was working diligently to obtain state support for a system of railroads and canals across Florida, the Alabama legislature renewed its long-standing proposal to annex the area west of the Apalachicola River.³² Not all Alabamians agreed. The *Selma Sentinel* thought West Florida was without value. But the *Montgomery Journal* noted the valuable timber land there and reminded its readers that the Gulf of Mexico was the natural boundary of Alabama while the "narrow slip of Florida" was out of place and inconvenient. Both states would benefit by the change. Most Floridians agreed with the *Tallahassee Floridian and Journal* which refused to "consent to the dismemberment."³³

Accepting Yulee's argument that a railroad system would bind the distant parts of Florida together as well as promote development of its resources, the legislature enacted a law guaranteeing state aid to private companies willing to build several needed rail connections, including one between Jacksonville and Pensacola. Meanwhile, however, Pensacola continued to look toward interior Alabama for trade and commerce. The Alabama and Florida Railroad received charters from both states to build a line connecting Pensacola with Montgomery.³⁴

Undaunted by Florida's hostile reception of the 1853 proposal, the Alabama legislature again proposed cession in 1853.³⁵ Judge Gappa T. Yelverton was appointed commissioner to confer with Florida authorities about the transfer. Middle Florida was again provoked by the suggestion. The *Madison Messenger* asked, "Does Alabama think we will consent to have all of West Florida, by far the most important part of our State in a commercial point of view, with two of our largest and most import-

³² *Acts of Alabama*, 1853-54, 501.

³³ *Tallahassee Floridian and Journal*, February 11, 1854.

³⁴ George W. Pettengill, Jr., *The Story of Florida Railroads* (Boston, 1952), 15-16.

³⁵ *Acts of Alabama*, 1857-58, 432.

ant cities and the best harbors on our whole Atlantic or Gulf coast, ruthlessly cut off from us . . . Not a bit of it. . . ." The Tallahassee *Floridian and Journal* indicated that Judge Yelverton's visit would be unwelcome.³⁶ When Florida officials declined to consider the matter, the project was abandoned.³⁷

Secession and Civil War not only diverted attention from the annexation question for the next several years, but also encouraged a greater feeling of identity with the state of Florida among many of its residents. Although Alabamians unhesitatingly crossed the state line and joined military units at Milton because of the close identity of the two regions, Floridians had an opportunity for the first time to pursue an important common goal. Postwar administrations at Tallahassee tried to capitalize on this incipient state loyalty by completing the transportation network which David Yulee had earlier sponsored. At the same time, many citizens of Pensacola and West Florida were still tied closely to Alabama, while others believed that the area's economic development depended on railroad connections with interior Alabama. Citizens of Pensacola worked hard to restore a rail link with Montgomery either by repairing the Alabama and Florida Railroad or by building a line westward to intersect a Mobile and Montgomery line. Officials at Tallahassee realized that a railroad connecting Pensacola with Middle and East Florida was essential to the future of the state.

Alabama's most serious and sustained effort to annex West Florida occurred in the post-Civil War period. Sectional attitudes toward the change remained much the same as they had always been, but several prominent Pensacola promoters made it clear that they favored a boundary change if it seemed likely to give them rail connections with the interior and the Atlantic coast. People on both sides of the 31st parallel began discussing the desirability of Florida's ceding the area west of the Choctawatchee River to Alabama. In December 1868, the Alabama legislature passed a joint resolution, sponsored by Senator J. L. Pennington, a Lee County Republican, authorizing Governor

³⁶Tallahassee *Floridian and Journal*, January 30, 1858.

³⁷Owen, *History of Alabama*, Vol. II, 1392.

William H. Smith to open negotiations with Florida authorities for annexation to Alabama of all territory west of the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola rivers. The resolution noted that no transfer of control would be binding until the agreement had been ratified by the legislature of both states and approved by Congress. The Alabama legislature was not then aware that Florida's constitution would also require an amendment, or at least did not at first consider it a serious obstacle. The state auditor was authorized to pay "necessary incidental expenses."³⁸

A few days later Governor Smith appointed Pennington, Secretary of State Charles A. Miller, and A. J. Walker, a former Supreme Court judge who had been replaced when Congressional Reconstruction became effective, as commissioners to go to Florida and negotiate for annexation.³⁹ The *Montgomery Alabama State Journal* commented approvingly that "annexation will greatly improve the wealth of Alabama and give us territory that should have been our years ago."⁴⁰ With optimism typical of the period, the *Montgomery Weekly Mail* noted that the Alabama legislature would aid construction of a railroad connecting Pensacola with Middle Florida and predicted that Montgomery would soon have a railroad tie with Fernandina, "the best harbor on the Atlantic south of Norfolk." Such a route would make shipping cheaper because it would avoid the exorbitant insurance rates required for water transportation around the dangerous Florida keys.⁴¹ The *Talladega Watchtower* provided the sobering thought that any change of boundaries would be difficult since it would require an amendment to the Florida constitution.⁴² The *Pensacola West Florida Commercial*, a Conservative sheet, strongly favored annexation while the moderate Republican *Pensacola Observer* gave its support only after learning that Alabama was willing to pledge state credit to obtain financial aid for a railroad to be constructed eastward from the port city.⁴³

³⁸*Acts of Alabama*, 1868, 599.

³⁹William Garrett, *Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama* (Atlanta, 1872), 455.

⁴⁰*Montgomery Alabama State Journal*, January 9, 1869.

⁴¹*Montgomery Weekly Mail*, January 2, 1869.

⁴²*Talladega Watchtower*, January 27, 1869; *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, February 2, 1869.

⁴³*Montgomery Weekly Mail*, January 2, 1869.

The Alabama commissioners arrived in Tallahassee in mid-January while the Florida legislature was in session. Realizing the delicacy of their mission to ask one state to sell part of its territory to another, they explained to Governor Harrison Reed that "we visit in no spirit of arrogance or presumption." They proposed only to invite the governing officials and people of Florida to consider the question which had been long cherished. They believed there were good reasons for the change which a glance at the map would suggest. "The regularity of a geometrical figure which it would give Alabama, the improvement in the outlines of Florida . . . the fact that Alabama streams traverse West Florida, the commerce and trade between West Florida and Alabama, and the homogeneity of tastes, sentiments and interest . . . combine to afford argument for a political connection so obvious that they have long been recognized." More important for the Alabama commission, however, was the presence of extensive iron and coal deposits in central Alabama awaiting development. Their products would be shipped through Pensacola, making it a great city, "probably the Birmingham of America."

Assuring the Florida leaders that they were interested only in the area west of the Choctawatchee which would give them Pensacola, the Alabamians noted that they believed it more equitable to West Floridians if the line were drawn at the Apalachicola. Asking that Governor Reed appoint a committee to communicate with them, the Alabamians prepared to leave Tallahassee and allow the Floridians to decide for themselves whether to pursue the question.⁴⁴

Probably because it served their own purposes, Florida authorities received the Alabama commissioners much more enthusiastically than the latter had expected. Noting that any cession of territory would require a change of the constitution, Governor Reed agreed to recommend that the Florida legislature consider the Alabama proposal. This scarcely committed the governor to the change since a constitutional amendment required the consent of two-thirds of the legislature in two successive sessions and approval of a majority of the voters.⁴⁵ Reed

⁴⁴Montgomery *Alabama State Journal*, January 30, 1869.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

told the legislature that West Florida discontent with the rest of the state might be mitigated if a railroad were built between Quincy and Pensacola as called for the by the 1855 Internal Improvement Act. Without such a railroad, the governor admitted that he could understand the desire of West Floridians to be ceded.⁴⁶

Under a suspension of the rules, the Florida legislature rapidly passed a joint resolution authorizing the governor to appoint a commission to confer with the Alabama delegation about the cession of West Florida. Before the legislature met again in January, 1870, the governor was to call an election in the area west of the Apalachicola to see if a majority desired annexation. Since the exact area to be transferred was not decided upon, the votes on the east and west side of the Choctawatchee were to be kept separate so the views of each group would be known.⁴⁷

Returning to Alabama with high hopes, Pennington, Miller, and Walker reported their mission "far more successful than we anticipated." Pennington told Governor Smith that he expected annexation to be accomplished by the following winter.⁴⁸ The chief executive and legislature of Florida were favorable to the change, according to some Alabama newspapers.⁴⁹ An elderly resident of Marianna, Jackson County, Florida, wrote that he and "the West" were hoping to be annexed to Alabama.⁵⁰

Public debate over annexation did not become serious until after the two state commissions completed a firm agreement. Governor Reed appointed three commissioners from Florida who went to Montgomery as guests of the state of Alabama and negotiated with the Alabama commissioners. All three sections of the state were represented. Dr. N. C. Moragne, a state

⁴⁶Jacksonville *Florida Union*, January 28, 1869; Florida, *House Journal*, 1869, 91.

⁴⁷Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, January 31, 1869.

⁴⁸J. L. Pennington to W. H. Smith, February 10, 1869, W. H. Smith Executive File, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

⁴⁹Tuscaloosa *Independent Monitor*, February 2, 1869.

⁵⁰Ethelred Philips to J. J. Philips, February 16, 1869, J. J. Philips Papers, Southern Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; William Garrot Brown, *History of Alabama* (New York and New Orleans, 1905), 269.

senator from Palatka on the St. Johns River represented the East, Charles E. Dyke, long-time editor of the Tallahassee *Floridian* and prominent Conservative-Democratic leader who opposed the cession, was the Middle Florida member, and William J. Purman, a former Freedmen's Bureau agent, native of Pennsylvania, and Republican senator from Jackson County, spoke for West Florida.⁵¹

Arriving in Montgomery in early May, 1869, the Florida commissioners were lodged at the Exchange Hotel and lavishly entertained during their visit.⁵² There was a brief delay in opening negotiations because Secretary of State Miller was called to Tuscaloosa to deal with a racial disturbance.⁵³ Upon his return an agreement was reached in which the Floridians drove a hard bargain. According to a document signed on May 17, the Florida commissioners agreed to cede eight counties west of the Apalachicola River to Alabama. The agreement was contingent upon acceptance by both states, and the consent of Congress. The area to be ceded comprised about 10,000 square miles inhabited by about 27,000 people. The assessed property of the region yielded about \$47,000 in state and county taxes in 1860.⁵⁴ For the territory, Alabama was to pay \$1,000,000 in thirty year, eight percent bonds. About 1,500,000 acres of public lands were to go to Alabama. All officials of West Florida were to retain their offices and special arrangements were made with respect to the jurisdiction of courts under Alabama law. Governors of the two states, within sixty days after agreement of Congress, were to issue proclamations declaring the transfer of jurisdiction over the ceded territory. Alabama agreed to give financial aid to a railroad from the Apalachicola River to Pensacola or some point on the Montgomery and Mobile Railroad by endorsing its bonds at the rate of \$16,000 per mile. The Savannah and Gulf—a Georgia railroad running from Savannah to Bainbridge with plans for extending to New Orleans—was to be denied permission to

⁵¹Tallahassee *Weekly Floridian*, May 25, 1869.

⁵²Montgomery *Alabama State Journal*, May 8, 1869.

⁵³Montgomery *Weekly Mail*, May 22, 1869.

⁵⁴Tuscaloosa *Independent Monitor*, June 1, 1869; Talladega *Watchtower*, May 26, 1869.

cross the territory for three years after the transfer.⁵⁵

The Montgomery *Daily Advertiser* critically observed that if the bonds were outstanding for twenty years, the state would have paid more than \$3,000,000 for the port of Pensacola. Since the question had been "agitated for the past twenty-five years" with no results, the paper thought the people should have a chance to decide if the transaction was worth the cost.⁵⁶ Mobile leaders generally opposed annexation. L. W. Lawler of that city ridiculed the purchase of a "few sterile counties" for \$1,000,000 by "people already oppressed by high taxes." He saw no advantage to Alabama except improved symmetry of the map. Pensacola was already open to Alabamians and had been for fifty years. The legislature might better use its funds by improving Mobile harbor.⁵⁷ In a letter to the *West Alabamian*, Thomas M. Peters agreed that "if we have money to spare, let's use it on Mobile. We need the money more than we need any part of Florida."⁵⁸ Ryland Randolph of the *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor* said West Florida was "too poor to sprout peas." The *Talladega Watchtower* opposed additional indebtedness because taxes were already too heavy.⁵⁹

Many other Alabamians were just as emphatically in favor of the purchase. The Jacksonville *Republican* admitted that Florida was benefiting by receiving \$80,000 a year in interest on the bonds and completion of a railroad connection from Pensacola to Fernandina. But Alabama's acquisition of the port of Pensacola was significant since it would become a coaling station for ships of the world. Furthermore, rail connections from Mobile to Fernandina would enable the Alabama city to handle all the cotton which normally was shipped to Savannah

⁵⁵Jacksonville [Alabama] *Republican*, May 29, 1869; Pennington and Walker to W. H. Smith, June 3, 1869, Smith Executive File; *Documents Accompanying the Governor's Messages, 1869*, (Montgomery, 1869), 3-8.

⁵⁶Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, May 19, 1869.

⁵⁷Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, February 13, 1870.

⁵⁸Montgomery *Alabama State Journal*, August 7, 1869.

⁵⁹Quoted in Ralph Erskine Pannell, "The Administration of William Hugh Smith: Governor of Alabama, 1868-1870," (unpublished Master's thesis, Alabama Polytechnical Institute, 1958), 53.

over the Georgia Central.⁶⁰ The *Montgomery Weekly Mail* agreed that the Georgia Central would be "completely flanked" and Mobile would begin a new era and add taxable property to the state.⁶¹

Pennington, Walker, and Miller admitted that the Floridians had obtained a high purchase price, but "this was unavoidable" because Alabama was asking the peninsular state to sell part of its territory. They thought it scarcely conceivable that Florida would reject such a favorable agreement, but if that happened "the subject had better be dropped forever, for a more favorable opportunity or a fairer one will never be presented."⁶² Governor Smith objected to the high price, but recognizing Florida's superior bargaining position, recommended that the legislature accept the agreement.⁶³

Florida attitudes toward the cession agreement were comparable to those regarding similar attempts before the war. East Floridians were generally favorable to the change, although many were now indifferent and a few opposed dismemberment of the state. West Floridians were divided, but important leaders favored annexation. Middle Florida was again opposed. Returning to Tallahassee after completing the cession agreement, Dyke lashed out at the proposition of "lopping off one-sixth of the state area, one-fifth of the entire population, every harbor on the Gulf capable of admitting a decent sized ship and one-sixth of our taxable resources. Surely our people will not do this." But he also identified the major cause of discontent in West Florida. It was true, he said, that the people there needed transportation but the state of Florida should give it to them. "This annexation scheme has to be met." Otherwise, "it will come up again and again until the cause is removed." Arguing that Pensacola was worth keeping, Dyke favored any "reasonable aid" by the state to a railroad across West Florida. "Give them the railroad and annexation fever will die." "Let us retain the west at all hazard. Florida as she is, now and forever,

⁶⁰Jacksonville [Alabama] *Republican*, May 29, 1869.

⁶¹*Montgomery Weekly Mail*, May 26, 1869.

⁶²*Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, June 9, 1869.

⁶³*Ibid.*; *Alabama State Documents*, 1869-70, Governor's Message.

one and indivisible, must be our motto."⁶⁴ The Republican Tallahassee *Sentinel* in rare agreement with its Conservative rival said "Hold on to our seaports. Part with Pensacola and the credit of our State is gone beyond redemption . . . immigration pamphlets will be worthless save as lining for the trunks of the departing carpetbaggers, among whom we shall not be hindmost."⁶⁵

Final decisions on annexation were postponed because neither the Florida legislature nor Governor Reed wished to act until the sentiments of West Floridians were determined. The legislature authorized an election in the eight West Florida counties for November 1869. When the Alabama legislature convened in the same month, the results of the West Florida election were not reported. Action was deferred until the November, 1870, session.

The circumstances of a special session of the Florida legislature in June, 1869, indicated that Governor Reed and several legislators may have been more interested in using the annexation proposal as a threat to obtain desired railroad legislation than in ceding a portion of the state. Reed, an old Wisconsin Whig turned Republican, wanted to complete the transportation system outlined in the 1855 Internal Improvement Act, including the railroad from Jacksonville to Pensacola. By early 1869, people all over the state had joined West Floridians in clamoring for completion of the road. Two companies had built the line as far west as Quincy before the Civil War. But nearly 200 miles of track were still required to link Quincy with Pensacola and give West Floridians rail transportation to the state capital and the Atlantic coast. When Alabama proposed the purchase of West Florida in early 1869, a series of complex negotiations were in progress to provide the railroad west of Quincy.

The Florida, Atlantic and Gulf Central Railroad, which had built from Jacksonville to Lake City, and the Pensacola and Georgia, running from Lake City to Quincy, were both bankrupt and deeply in debt to the Florida Internal Improvement Fund

⁶⁴Montgomery *Alabama State Journal*, June 5, 1869.

⁶⁵Tallahassee *Sentinel*, quoted in *Palatka Herald*, June 2, 1869.

after the Civil War. The Fund Trustees were exceedingly generous with the roads, but both failed by 1868 and were sold at public auction. The sales were friendly, having been agreed to in advance by the individuals who controlled them. The effect of the sales was to transfer the roads' debts to the Internal Improvement Fund and free the companies to resume operation and extend the line westward.⁶⁶ Following these negotiations closely, Editor Dyke had written in the *Floridian* in early February that "if our West Florida friends will have a little patience, we think that annexation to Florida will be accomplished. . . ."⁶⁷

Governor Reed was keenly interested in the success of a new company being formed to control both the old roads and build the new line. Edward Houstoun, the president of the Pensacola and Georgia, had contacted George W. Swepson, an influential investor of North Carolina, and interested him in the Florida roads.⁶⁸ Swepson's partner and legislative lobbyist was Milton S. Littlefield, an extremely popular, free-spending, former Union military officer, who had become closely acquainted with Governor Reed and his wife when the three were in Fernandina during the war. Anxious for the westward railroad, friendly with Littlefield, and perhaps dazzled by the promoter's splendid life style, Reed did everything he could to cooperate.

Littlefield and Swepson wanted an act incorporating the Jacksonville, Pensacola and Mobile Railroad Company with power to consolidate the two existing lines from Jacksonville to Quincy and a monopoly right to build from the latter city through Pensacola to Mobile. Partially to secure necessary legislation for the incipient company, Reed called a special

⁶⁶Jacksonville *Mercury and Floridian*, March 27, 1869; Tallahassee *Sentinel*, March 27, 1869; C. K. Brown, "The Florida Investments of George W. Swepson," *North Carolina Historical Review*, V (July, 1928), 276; Paul E. Fenlon, "The Notorious Swepson-Littlefield Fraud: Railroad Financing in Florida, 1868-1871," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXII (1954), 238; *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund*, I (Tallahassee, 1902), 370-72.

⁶⁷Pensacola *Commercial*, February 2, 1869, quoting *Floridian*.

⁶⁸E. Houstoun to J. P. Sanderson, February 3, 1869, Edward M. L'Engle Papers, Southern Collection.

session of the legislature in June, 1869.⁶⁹ Having told the body in January that West Florida's desires for annexation to Alabama could be satisfied by extending the railroad from Quincy to Pensacola, Reed asked the special session to incorporate the new company and grant it aid under the 1855 Internal Improvement Act.⁷⁰ Even with Reed's backing, the measures still encountered stiff opposition. Dilatory efforts stalled action so that railroad supporters threatened to filibuster to death the annual appropriations measure, which was also being considered at the same time, unless their bills received favorable consideration. Senator William Purman of Jackson County, one of the Florida commissioners to Montgomery, warned that he would work for annexation of West Florida to Alabama if construction of a railroad through his section were delayed. A senator retorted that this would be an easy way to dispose of Senator Purman.⁷¹ Two bills finally became law which incorporated the Jacksonville, Pensacola and Mobile Railroad and guaranteed it state aid comparable to that which Alabama had promised to furnish for railroad construction eastward from Pensacola.⁷²

Before the special session had taken up the railroad bills, Purman wrote J. L. Pennington insisting that he come to Tallahassee and "work on the members of the legislature from West Florida . . . and secure their cooperation."⁷³ With Governor Smith's approval, Pennington left for Tallahassee with \$1,000 "for expenses and to use at Tallahassee."⁷⁴ Governor Reed's interest in annexation diminished markedly after the railroad legislation was approved and he subsequently opposed any cession of Florida territory. Purman's advocacy of the transfer was also lessened after the special session, but there was still considerable enthusiasm in West Florida for the change.⁷⁵ Pennington spent several weeks and about \$4,000 of Alabama state

⁶⁹Jacksonville *Florida Union*, June 17, 1869.

⁷⁰Florida, *House Journal*, 1869, Governor's Message, 15, Extra Session, Governor's Message, 10.

⁷¹Jacksonville *Florida Union*, June 17, 24, 1869.

⁷²*Laws of Florida*, Extra Session, 1869, 25-34, 40-42.

⁷³J. L. Pennington to W. H. Smith, June 7, 1869, Smith Executive File.

⁷⁴Pennington to Smith, June 7, 12, 1869, *ibid.*

⁷⁵Pensacola *Semi-Weekly Commercial*, June 8, 1869; Owen, *History of Alabama*, II, 1395.

funds campaigning in West Florida before the November election.⁷⁶ In the seven counties where elections were held, the vote was 1162 for annexation to Alabama and 661 against. No election was held in Jackson County which was allegedly so overwhelmingly in favor of the change that an election was superfluous.⁷⁷ Having been approved by a majority of the West Florida voters, the annexation proposal was turned over to the two state legislatures for consideration.

In January, 1870, a joint resolution was introduced in the Alabama legislature to ratify the agreement and request the state's Congressional delegation to seek approval from that body. Although a legislative committee reported favorably on the resolution, serious opposition was developing both in the capital and the state press. Some of the objections were repetitions of those made earlier: that Alabama could not afford the expense, that Alabamians would have the use of Pensacola harbor regardless of whether it was in Alabama or Florida, and that West Florida was a "sand-bank and gopher region."⁷⁸ The *Montgomery Advertiser* also warned that state endorsement of bonds for the railroad between Pensacola and the Apalachicola River would obligate Alabama to the extent of between \$2,000,000 and \$3,000,000 in addition to the purchase price.⁷⁹

The annexation suffered more from adverse criticism of the Alabama commissioners' expenditures than any other opposition. When it became known that the commissioners had spent \$10,500 on their annexation endeavors, the protest was so vigorous that a legislative committee composed of J. A. Gordy, H. C. Sandford, and I. D. Sibley was appointed to investigate the matter and report its findings. Its report was damaging to the commissioners and the annexation resolution before the legislature.⁸⁰

⁷⁶Caffey, "Annexation of West Florida," 115-16.

⁷⁷St. Augustine *Examiner*, December 11, 1869; Pensacola *West Florida Commercial*, November 16, 1869; Jonathan C. Gibbs to Governor of Alabama, December 1, 1869, Harrison Reed to William H. Smith, December 1, 1869, Smith Executive File; Owen, *History of Alabama*, II, 1395.

⁷⁸Caffey, "Annexation of West Florida," 115, quoting Hayneville *Examiner*.

⁷⁹Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, February 15, 1870.

⁸⁰*Alabama State Documents, 1869-70*, Auditors Report, 41; A. B. Moore, *History of Alabama* (Nashville, 1934), 494.

The governor had originally been authorized to draw treasury warrants "to defray necessary incidental expenses" in negotiating with Florida authorities." Considerable publicity was attracted to the financial question when Pennington's request for \$4,000 to be used in the West Florida election campaign was rejected by the state auditor. At Pennington's request, Governor Smith ordered the money released, but only after an attorney general's opinion that it was a proper expenditure.⁸¹ The *Mobile Register* criticized the use of so much money for the "avowed" purpose of influencing West Florida voters, "or in plain language to *bribe* them."⁸² When he learned that \$10,500 had been spent on the negotiations, Ryland Randolph denounced the "monstrous scheme" as "more thieving" by the Republicans who controlled the state.⁸³

While many critics had their own reasons for opposing annexation, the case against the commissioners was a serious one. Upon departing for Tallahassee in January, each had drawn \$500 for expenses. Then the three Florida commissioners had come to Montgomery at Alabama's expense. While two of them stayed less than two weeks and the other about a month, they were ostensibly entertained and billeted at the Exchange Hotel. Only \$16 of the money was ever specifically accounted for, but the commissioners drew another \$5,000 on May 17, the same day the agreement with the Floridians was completed. The hostile *Mobile Register* asked if the money was a bribe to the Florida commissioners. If not, "what became of it?" the paper demanded⁸⁴ With the final \$4,000, Pennington campaigned in all eight West Florida counties, distributing 200 copies of the *Alabama Manual* and 2500 copies of the commissioners' report on the proposed annexation. Most Conservative newspapers exonerated Judge Walker's actions while denouncing the two Republicans, but many people were disturbed that none of

⁸¹J. L. Pennington and Charles A. Miller to W. H. Smith, August 5, 1869, Smith Executive File; *Mobile Weekly Register*, February 12, 1870.

⁸²*Mobile Weekly Register*, February 12, 1870.

⁸³*Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, February 15, 22, 1870.

⁸⁴*Mobile Weekly Register*, February 12, 1870; *Montgomery Daily Advertiser*, February 15, 1870.

the three could offer a detailed accounting of the expenditures.⁸⁵

In late February, 1870, the legislature postponed further action on annexation until the following session. The announced reason for the delay was that the Florida legislature had adjourned without acting on the matter and would not meet again until January, 1871. Meanwhile, the Alabama people would have time to consider the matter and let their legislative representatives know their feelings.

While the furor over expenditures was taking place at Montgomery, Florida's Governor Reed reported to the legislature in January, 1870, that the West Florida election had gone in favor of annexation. He added quickly that he did not believe that a significant number of all Floridians were willing to cede one-fifth of the state's territory and population and the finest harbor on the Gulf. Neither Reed nor any other Florida official took any further action to complete the transaction with Alabama. He was hopeful at the time that the Jacksonville, Pensacola and Mobile Railroad Company would complete its construction between Quincy and Pensacola. Although sentiment in Pensacola for annexation remained strong, little was said about it until the newly chartered railroad company became hopelessly bankrupt in 1873 and left West Florida again without prospect of a transportation link with Middle Florida and the capital.

Annexation was discussed frequently in the Alabama legislature after the 1870 resolution was delayed, but it did not receive serious attention again until 1873 when Governor David Lewis assumed the initiative.⁸⁶ Recalling the 1869 agreement between the Alabama and Florida commissioners, Lewis reminded the 1873 legislature of the benefits its completion would bring both states. Arguing that there was no way that a railroad could profitably unite East and West Florida, he asked

⁸⁵J. A. Gordy to W. H. Smith, December 14, 1869, Smith Executive File; *Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor*, February 15, 1870; *Mobile Weekly Register*, February 5, 12, 1870; Caffey, "Annexation of West Florida," 118.

⁸⁶Alabama, *Senate Journal*, 1873, 100, 107, 175; Owen, *History of Alabama*, II, 1395.

the legislature to renew negotiations for cession. There was vigorous opposition to the proposal in both houses. A delaying amendment failed in the senate by only four votes. But in March, a joint resolution passed, authorizing the issue of \$1,000,000 worth of coupon bonds to be given to Florida in exchange for the territory west of the Apalachicola River and its share of the Florida state debt. This time the resolution specifically allowed \$3,000 for expenses.⁸⁷ Lewis transmitted the resolution to Florida Governor Ossian B. Hart, expressing hope that he would call a special legislative session to which Alabama commissioners could be sent to speak.⁸⁸

Neither Governor Hart, who was ill during most of his term, nor the Florida legislature were interested in the annexation proposal. But there was no dearth of Floridians willing to campaign for it for a consideration. Ex-Governor Harrison Reed, repudiated by his party and without employment, offered his services to Lewis. Explaining that he had opposed cession of West Florida in 1869 because he thought Floridians were willing to build the railroad to Pensacola, he wrote that "it is now apparent that it is not the intention of our legislature to secure these advantages to the state" Reed thought there was a disposition among Floridians to favor cession in 1873. "I myself am inclined to favor it," he declared, adding that "If you will authorize me to act for Alabama with sufficient means in hand to prepare the way, I think I can undertake it successfully"⁸⁹

Purman, who had been elevated to Congress since his 1869 negotiations in Montgomery, acted as broker between Hart and Lewis and also attempted to extract some funds from the Alabama governor. He warned Governor Lewis that the annexation question would not be decided according to the wishes of the people living in West Florida. Ostensibly speaking with Governor Hart's permission, Purman warned that the chief

⁸⁷Hugh C. Bailey, "Alabama and West Florida Annexation," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXVI (1957), 228; Alabama, *Senate Journal*, 1873, 391, 440, 461, 463.

⁸⁸David P. Lewis to O. B. Hart, April 11, 1873, Governor David P. Lewis Correspondence, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

⁸⁹Harrison Reed to David P. Lewis, February 18, 1873, Lewis Correspondence.

executive favored annexation only if the question were submitted to all of the people of the state for approval. Thus, "we must have the press on our side," he insisted. Because it was in financial difficulty, the Jacksonville *Tri-Weekly Union* was about to be acquired by Lieutenant Governor Marcellus L. Stearns who opposed annexation. This could only be prevented if a contribution were made to the paper at once.⁹⁰ Governor Lewis replied that there was no fund for such purposes, but he was willing to be responsible for \$15,000 from the executive contingent fund if annexation succeeded.⁹¹

Whether the requested contribution was made is not clear. Lieutenant Governor Stearns subsequently acquired the support of the Jacksonville *Union*, but Purman also worked diligently during 1873 for annexation. At his bidding, a Pensacola delegation visited Jacksonville in May to secure support from that section.⁹² From Palatka on the St. Johns, Calvin Gillis wrote that he had favored cession of West Florida to Alabama for years because it would benefit the East. It would make Florida more compact, internal improvement projects could be concentrated, and the capital city could be removed to the East. Warning that Middle Florida would fight annexation in order to keep the capital at Tallahassee, Gillis suggested that an East Florida newspaper campaign emphasizing the advantages of cession would be fruitful.⁹³

Governor Lewis not only favored the newspaper publicity, but also intervened in a state legislative contest in West Florida.⁹⁴ R. W. Cobb, an Alabama businessman who had lived many years in Pensacola, Lewis E. Parsons, former Alabama governor, and J. C. Goodloe were appointed by Lewis as commissioners to work in Florida for annexation.⁹⁵ Confidential negotiations at Tallahassee apparently convinced several prominent legislators that a vote of the people on annexation was

⁹⁰W. J. Purman to David P. Lewis, April 21, 1873, *ibid.*

⁹¹Lewis to Purman, April, 1873, *ibid.*

⁹²Purman to Lewis, May 12, 1873, *ibid.*

⁹³C. Gillis to R. W. Ruter, October 10, 1873, *ibid.*

⁹⁴Lewis to Lewis E. Parsons, J. C. Goodloe, and R. W. Cobb, October 20, 1873, *ibid.*

⁹⁵R. W. Cobb to Lewis, May 23, 1873, *ibid.*

unnecessary and that the legislature itself could complete the transaction if a majority of West Floridians favored it. It thus became imperative to have as many annexationists in the legislature as possible and especially to have a favorable West Florida delegation. Customs Collector Hiram Potter was the incumbent state senator from Escambia County. His rival was United States Marshal George E. Wentworth who was believed to be more favorable toward annexation. To have Wentworth replace Potter in the senate, Governor Lewis was induced to interfere in the Escambia County election.⁹⁶ R. W. Butler of Pensacola led the movement but Senator Jere Haralson and other Alabamians also campaigned against Potter. Having made such an issue of the election, Lewis was understandably disappointed when Potter was re-elected.⁹⁷ He tried to dissassociate the state of Alabama from Ruter and the Pensacola election, but the cause of annexation was severely damaged.

In 1874 Governor Lewis told the legislature that no further arrangements were contemplated for the annexation of West Florida.⁹⁸ The Alabama Constitution of 1875 prohibited the state from borrowing money for any purpose except to repel invasion and ended the lending of state credit to aid internal improvement companies. Since any purchase of territory would henceforth require an amendment to the Alabama constitution, another obstacle was added to the already complex process by which West Florida could be annexed. This ended the most serious effort to detach the Florida panhandle. Little was said about it for several years, but East Floridians began calling for removal of the state capital eastward from Tallahassee, while West Floridians often expressed dissatisfaction with the treatment received from the rest of the state. The West Florida railroad was finally completed in the early 1880s and Edward A. Perry of Pensacola was elected governor in 1884, but some West Floridians still complained that they were being slighted.

The annexation issue was revived again in 1889, although

⁹⁶R. W. Ruter to Lewis, n/d, 1873, *ibid*.

⁹⁷Lewis to Ruter, December 29, 1873; Bailey, "Alabama and West Florida," 231.

⁹⁸Alabama, *Senate Journal*, 1874-75, 8.

most observers refused to take the matter seriously. The Tallahassee *Floridian*, which was interested in retaining West Florida to prevent removal of the capital scoffed at "the chimerical scheme of ceding West Florida . . . [which] we have regarded as a huge joke"⁹⁹ The Jacksonville *Times-Union* denied that annexation was "of sufficient importance to become a vital issue . . ." but used up several columns of space discussing it anyway.¹⁰⁰ The Montgomery *Daily Advertiser* thought "Florida looks like a pistol. Annexation of West Florida would cut off the muzzle."¹⁰¹ In a more serious vein, it observed that there were many obstacles to annexation and that the proper time to accomplish it was in 1819. Before the railroad was completed from Pensacola to the Apalachicola River, Pensacola citizens had to travel to the Florida capital through Montgomery. As distance to the capital diminished, so did the desire for annexation among West Floridians.¹⁰²

Some Alabamians were as avid as ever for annexation, however. The Brewton *Standard Gauge* said "West Florida belongs by right to Alabama Renew the negotiations of fifteen years ago. East Florida will not oppose the scheme, as they want an orange state with the capital at Orlando."¹⁰³ The Eufaula *Weekly Times and News* noted that West Floridians "want in," and urged Alabama to "accept them."¹⁰⁴ In West Florida, both Pensacola newspapers favored annexation but the Milton *Clarion* opposed.

There was sufficient interest that an annexation convention was held at Chipley, Florida, on July 4. Six West Florida counties sent delegates, and there were scattered representatives from Alabama.¹⁰⁵ But at the same time, a *Times-Union* survey indicated that except for some East Floridians, most influential state leaders opposed any cession of territory. United States

⁹⁹Tallahassee *Weekly Floridian*, June 18, 1889.

¹⁰⁰Jacksonville *Times-Union*, July 3, 1889.

¹⁰¹Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, June 6, 1889.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, July 4, 7, 1889.

¹⁰³Brewton *Standard Gauge*, January 17, 1889.

¹⁰⁴Eufaula *Weekly Times and News*, June 6, 1889.

¹⁰⁵Montgomery *Daily Advertiser*, July 7, 1889; Eufaula *Weekly Times and News*, June 6, 1889.

Senator Samuel Pasco of Jefferson County did not "favor dismemberment of Florida." House Speaker John L. Gaskins and Senate President J. B. Wall both opposed and Wall noted that "every section is now linked by railroads." W. K. Hyer of Pensacola opposed with the comment that "I am a Floridian by birth and propose to remain one." His Pensacola neighbor, Stephen R. Mallory, agreed. Former Acting Governor A. K. Allison of Quincy did not wish "such mutilation of our state." Former Governor George F. Drew thought "Florida is all right as it is" Jacksonville Mayor P. McQuaid said he would be "sorry to see West Florida go." Former Governor Harrison Reed, despite his 1873 offer to work for annexation, thought the "proposition to cede West Florida to Alabama is . . . preposterous." State Senator C. F. A. Bielby of Volusia County, State Senator O. B. Smith of St. Augustine, S. B. Hubbard, a prominent Jacksonville banker, and Jacksonville Postmaster H. W. Clark adopted the traditional East Florida position in favor of ceding the territory to Alabama.¹⁰⁶ A few Georgians expressed hope that West Florida would go to Alabama and that Georgia might then annex Middle Florida.

The Chipley convention was a failure and agitation for annexation subsided. Meetings were held on the same day in other Florida localities to oppose the change. The *Times Union* called the Chipley meeting "a complete Waterloo for the annexationists." The New Orleans *Picayune* suggested that "if West Florida does not wish to join Alabama, let Alabama become a part of Florida."¹⁰⁷ The annexation scheme was dormant for another decade.

Dissatisfaction among Pensacola citizens over what they deemed official neglect aroused Alabamians' hopes for annexation again in 1901. After years of discussion about removing Florida's capital from Tallahassee, Jacksonville boosters finally managed to obtain a popular referendum on the issue in 1900. Although East Florida's strength was diminished by competition between Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Ocala, the election posed a formidable threat to Tallahassee. Pensacola

¹⁰⁶Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, July 3, 1889.

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*, July 7, 1889.

residents allied with Middle Florida and voted against changing the capital site. But during the campaign the long-standing West Florida feeling of isolation from the remainder of the state manifested itself in complaints of neglect and mistreatment of the panhandle section.

Reaction from other Florida localities was strong. One newspaper expressed surprise that anyone living in Florida could be dissatisfied and thought it "a mystery to be solved."¹⁰⁸ The Jacksonville *Times-Union and Citizen* denied that West Florida had been "contemptuously treated" by other people of the state and saw no reason why the section could expect better treatment from Alabama. It also failed to understand "why the city that lately gave us a Governor and has now a Federal Senator can claim want of political recognition."¹⁰⁹ The Tampa Times also deprecated the complaints and reminded West Florida that Pensacola harbor had received more aid than any other harbor on the entire Florida coast. Its depth of thirty-three feet of water on the bar at mean low tide had been accomplished through governmental aid. Complaints of neglect were, according to the *Times*, unjust to Florida's Congressional delegation.¹¹⁰

Still hoping to acquire the strip of sand between the 31st parallel and the Gulf of Mexico which separated its state from the seacoast, the Alabama legislature on March 4, 1901, resolved in favor of annexing West Florida and authorized the governor to appoint commissioners to confer with a Florida commission. The commissioners were "to do all necessary to perfect and consummate the agreement for cession," but their action was not binding until approved by the legislature and the governor. Governor William D. Jelks appointed William L. Martin, Richard C. Jones, and Samuel Blackwell to go to Florida.¹¹¹ The constitutional convention of 1901 even considered a proposal to provide in the new document authority to use state funds for the purchase. The convention reflected the conservative mood of the

¹⁰⁸ Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union and Citizen*, March 7, 1901.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, March 6, 1901. S. R. Mallory, Jr., was elected to the United States Senate in 1897.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, March 5, 1901.

¹¹¹ *Code of Alabama*, 1907, Sections 80 and 81; Owen, *History of Alabama*, II, 1392.

electorate with respect to spending, however, and no such provision was made.¹¹² As a practical matter, the wealth and population of West Florida had increased by 1901 until a purchase agreement of the kind made in 1869 would have been extremely difficult even if the two states had desired one.

Despite the discontent voiced by some West Floridians in 1900-1901, there seems to have been little sentiment for joining Alabama. Most Florida newspapers opposed cession while denying that anyone was seriously considering it. Florida officials took no action and the Alabama commission was never officially organized. In a lengthy review of past efforts to annex West Florida, Francis G. Caffey told the Alabama State Bar Association in 1901 that "it is almost axiomatic in the history of this country that the feeling in favor of State integrity is so strong that no State will ever give up any part of its territory."¹¹³

The Alabama legislature continued to consider resolutions calling for negotiations to acquire West Florida during the 20th century, but few observers expected them to lead to action. As late as 1963, State Senator John M. Tyson of Mobile obtained a joint resolution to establish a committee to look into annexation. The committee was to contact the Florida officials, discuss the proposal and plans of completing the transfer, and report to the 1964 legislative session. An eight member committee headed by Senator Neil Metcalf was appointed in September. Although the committee met twice in February and March, 1964, it was never able to interest Florida authorities. Florida Governor Farris Bryant made jocular remarks about the issue at a February news conference. Pensacola officials voiced overwhelming opposition and a straw vote conducted by a local newspaper showed the public to be equally opposed to the idea of joining Alabama.¹¹⁴ Unable to interest the legislative committee or Alabama Governor George C. Wallace in pursuing the matter further, Senator Tyson visited West Florida alone in

¹¹²MacMillan, *Constitutional Development in Alabama*, 327-28, 344.

¹¹³Caffey, "Annexation of West Florida," 129.

¹¹⁴C. Peter Ripley, "Alabama's 1963 Attempt to Annex West Florida," *Apalachee*, 1967, 88-89.

late March, 1964, speaking to several civic groups about the advantages to be gained by its residents if the Florida panhandle joined Alabama. Most people took Tyson lightly and few doubted that he had any more serious motive than to attract attention to his forthcoming Congressional campaign.¹¹⁵

The West Florida annexation question emphasizes the extent to which the framers of American government succeeded in their determination to build into the system checks against hasty action. That it is much easier to prevent an act than to complete one in our legislative process is demonstrated by the failure of Alabamians and West Floridians to remove a political boundary that no one especially wanted at least during the first few years of its existence. But as Florida continued to exist as a single territory and then a state some people developed interests in keeping it that way. The early influence of Middle Florida and its vested interests in the *status quo* diminished the chances of annexation in the days before the single state tradition became strong. Tradition became one of the most compelling forces opposing separation. The idea of two separate Floridas diminished and people became accustomed to the state with its existing boundaries. Any suggested change was an affront to state pride.

As the population of Florida spread southward down the peninsula, section contention shifted. The old East and West sections gradually became North Florida opposed to South Florida. But this time the geographic division was mitigated by a concomitant awareness of differences between rural and urban interests.

Whether the substantive benefits anticipated by the proponents of annexation would have materialized is debatable. While it would have been somewhat simpler to furnish state aid to internal improvement projects within the boundaries of a single political division, the development of trade between Pensacola and interior Alabama was not seriously hampered by the failure to achieve annexation. Even though people continued for years to look toward the state government for most official

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, 94.

actions affecting their lives, one of the major purposes of the Constitution of 1787 was to remove any political barriers to interstate trade. To the extent that political boundaries mattered, Pensacola was as accessible to Alabamians after 1821 as was Mobile. Indeed, Pensacola was gradually tied by rail to the interior of the United States through Alabama in the late 19th century and it was the national government which financed harbor improvements there.

In the 20th century the role of state governments has diminished markedly as national powers have expanded. Improved transportation and instant communications have reduced the significance of state boundaries. While many students of government argue that state governments and the federal system have outlived their usefulness there are concomitant efforts to strengthen them. While it is unlikely that the flow of power to Washington will be reversed significantly, it is all the more probable that any future efforts to change the Alabama-Florida boundary will fail. Any possible substantive advantages to the change have consistently diminished while tradition has strengthened the opposition to it.

EARLY CHRONICLES OF BARBOUR COUNTY

by

Green Beauchamp

(Editor's note—Since 1903 the Alabama Department of Archives and History has sought to secure a complete file of Green Beauchamp's "Early Chronicles of Barbour County," with the intention of reprinting them. The "Chronicles" were published serially in the *Eufaula Times* in 1873 and 1874. Unfortunately, no issues of the *Times* for those months have ever been located, but columns clipped from the papers were given to the Archives by the Beauchamp family. Even though Miss Anne Kendrick Walker indicated in *Backtracking in Barbour County* that a reprint had been completed, Dr. Thomas M. Owen, director of the Archives from 1901 to 1920, apparently abandoned the idea. Dr. Peter A. Brannon, late director of the Archives, also planned unsuccessfully to publish the extant articles in the *Alabama Historical Quarterly*. Continuing interest in Beauchamp's "Chronicles" and the uniqueness of the clippings in the files of the Archives have indicated that a republication is still in order.

While the incompleteness of the series is obvious, an effort has been made to arrange them in proper sequence. Numbers have been assigned to each article, and, where a date could be determined, it has been added to the number. Complete annotation was obviously not possible since many of the statements are based on Beauchamp's recollections and are otherwise not provable; therefore, no annotation has been attempted. Except for the most obvious typographical errors, all spellings and grammatical forms have been retained. As original historical essays the "Chronicles" have merit and are here reprinted with the intention of making generally available an important, yet hitherto restricted, segment of local history.

From information collected by the Archives it appears that Green Beauchamp was born in 1800, the son of Littleton Beauchamp, who served in the Maryland militia during the American Revolution. The elder Beauchamp settled in Baldwin County, Georgia, sometime after 1780, moving to Henry County, Ala-

bama, by 1819. His second son, Green, migrated with him and apparently moved freely about the new country during a long life, observing and noting mentally, at least, his observations. In 1836 and 1837 he served Barbour County in the State Legislature and was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1865.

Green Beauchamp married Caroline Kennon of Ft. Gaines, Georgia, but had no children. What facts about his personal life Dr. Owen was able to discover were obtained from nieces and nephews, one of whom wrote in 1913 that Beauchamp was peculiarly sensitive about disclosing his age. For information that might be on his tombstone Dr. Owen sought vainly for years for Beauchamp's grave, said to be in a family cemetery near White Oak Station. In 1968 Mrs. Marie H. Godfrey located a cemetery off Alabama Highway 30 between Eufaula and Clayton in which a Green Beauchamp is buried. The tombstone states simply, "Green Beauchamp/died 1883").

I

[Undated]

Those who expect connection and historical stateliness in these memoirs will be disappointed. They are merely the attempt to rescue from oblivion recollections that ought not to perish.

Mr. Green Beauchamp was one of the earliest settlers in this county. In 1818 he crossed the Chattahoochee at Fort Gaines, in a flat, and settled on what is now the Wingate plantation in Henry county. There were, he assures us, not a hundred white people in the whole country which now makes eight counties, to-wit:

Covington, Crenshaw, Pike, Dale, Coffee, Geneva, Henry and Barbour. All that was then Henry. He was clerk of the first county court held for this vast county. He was present at the first circuit court held for the county. It was in 1818, and presided over by Judge Reuben Saffold. There being no court

house, it was held in the dwelling house of John G. Morgan, the sheriff. A. B. Mathews was the clerk of the circuit court, having been elected over Whitman Owens, Esq., an honored citizen of Henry county, who still survives. Senator Benj. Fitzpatrick was the solicitor. Mr. Towns, afterwards Governor of Georgia, and who lived in Montgomery, was present, also Hon. Sam'l E. Oliver. The next term was held at Richmond, which was established as the county site. There was no saw mill in the county. Such a thing as a plank was of course unknown, and all houses, as of course this court house, were built of logs. The only store was at John G. Morgan's, also the only blacksmith shop. The only grist mill was just below Franklin, on what is now the Columbia road, and on the very site of the mill that grinds there now. Green Beauchamp the next year helped dig out the rock and peck the hole through it and prepare it for mill stones for the second grist mill in the county. The stone answered the purpose and ground their corn. The mill was on the stream which is crossed by the natural bridge in going to Columbia, and was put up in 1819. Green Beauchamp afterward sold these mill rocks to Joe Davis for \$30. A Mr. Sutlive came over from Georgia and peddled his goods, to the great convenience of the people. The Indians called him Chofy hajo. The only ferry on the Chattahoochee was at Fort Gaines, where a company of United States troops were stationed.

II

[Undated]

One or two errors crept into our first article. The first circuit court was not held as early as 1818, which was before the admission of the State. An again, Mr. Sutlive, the Chofeehajo of the Indians, did not peddle goods in Alabama. He had a store at Fort Gaines and brought his goods in a peddler's wagon from the Ocmulgee river to the Chattahoochee, across the wilderness which then lay between those rivers. Jared Patterson, Col. Robt. Irvin, Moses Weems, Pius Chambers, Ned Cox, Mr. Nall, Levi B. Smith and Wm. Hardridge, and a few others whose names cannot be recalled, were here in 1818. Hardridge lived among the Indians at Chitteecknee town. Mr. John White-*hu*

hurst, a highly respected citizen now living at Lawrenceville, and his brother Pillitier, came in soon after. Mr. John Whitehurst, one of the few survivors of these early settlers, has lived his four score years and more.

The country was rapidly settled up after the admission of the State in 1819. The first road was the one leading from Franklin through Williamston to Louisville. It was never regularly cut out and established as public roads are now a days. It was first only a trail, and very crooked; but was widened and straitened [sic] as civilization advanced. There was four or five years afterwards a weekly horse mail from Sparta, Conecuh county, through Louisville and Williamston, to Franklin, and this was the first mail route ever established in the country. Mr. Bartly C. Williams was the first postmaster at Williamston, and Mr. Beauchamp the second. The only post offices were at those three places. Hon. James L. Pugh, when a boy, rode this mail from Louisville to Franklin. There was an Indian town on Chattahoochee, just above Prospect Bluff, called Chitteeocknee town. We believe Onushajo was the chief of this town. On the opposite side of the river was a town called Perryman's town, inhabited by some half breeds-Indian and mulatto-who could speak English.

III

[Undated]

The first circuit court for Barbour county, was held at Louisville and convened on the 4th Monday (25th) in March, 1833, Hon. Anderson Crenshaw, judge of the sixth judicial circuit, presiding. Harrell Hobdy was sheriff, and most probably Thomas Pugh clerk. The grand jury was composed of Henry Faulk, jr., foreman; Noah A. Tyson, William Bennett, Richard Head, jr., Zackariah Buch, William McRae, James Faulk, Henry Faulk, sr., William Head, Thomas Cavanaugh, John F. David, Starling Johnson, Miles McInnis. Daniel M. Dansby. Duncan McRae and Stephen Lee. Robert Teal was the constable sworn to attend them. These have all passed away except William McRae and Miles McInnis. There were but three bills found — one for

malicious mischief and two for assault and battery. Most of the minute entries are in the unmistakeable hand writing of Senator George Goldthwaite.

On the 4th Monday in September (23) 1833, the circuit court for Barbour County commenced at Louisville, Hon. Horatio G. Perry presiding as judge, Harrell Hobdy, Esq., being sheriff. We have been unable to ascertain the clerk's name, but think it was Thomas Pugh. When the following order was made: "Ordered, that this court be adjourned to the town of Clayton in said county, the place selected by the commissioners of said county as the permanent seat of justice. They, the commissioners, having certifyd [sic] to this court that a suitable house is prepared, and to meet at ten o'clock tomorrow." The next entry is "Clayton, Tuesday, September 24, 1833. The judge not attending, court adjourned till tomorrow ten o'clock." "Wednesday, three o'clock, September 25. The judge not appearing, the sheriff of Barbour county adjourned the court until court in coase."

The first circuit court every held at Clayton commenced on the 4th Monday in March, 1834, Hon. Anderson Crenshaw presiding, Harrell Hobdy sheriff, and probably Thomas Pugh clerk. The following was the first grand jury: William Beauchamp, foreman; Aerial Jones, John McInnis, Henry Bizzell, Joel Winslett, Daniel McLane, Benjamin D. Sellars, Thomas Warren, Hope H. Williams, Seaborn Jones, Ezekiel Wise, Ivy Cadenhead and Aaron Burlison. Cary Motes was their bailiff. All these, including the judge, are dead and gone, except Ezekiel Wise, a highly respected citizen, who still survives. The judgment entries on the minutes are almost all in the hand writing either of George Goldthwaite or Jefferson Buford. The first civil case that ever went on the docket marked No. 1 was that of Duncan McRae vs John McInnis, an appeal. It was continued from term to term and not decided till 28th September, 1835. In this first court held at Clayton ninety-five judgements were taken on Monday the first day. The court adjourned on Thursday.

The "suitable house," mentioned in the order at Louisville, was about twenty feet square made of round pine logs unharmed by any broad axe. There was one small opening for a window,

and one door in the southeast end. This primeval temple of justice sat cornerwise to those lines on which such important edifices are commonly erected, being neither north, south, east or west. It was located about where the rear of Mr. C. C. Green's store is now. Thomas Warren, in the summer of 1833, superintended the building, and Ryan Bennett helped get the four foot oak boards that covered it, out of a tree near the little branch that runs through the fair grounds. It was not quite equal to our present court house, yet it was "suitable" to those simple times in our country now forty years ago, and the pleadings which were read in that humble house at Clayton were made up by men whose talents and character have adorned our history; and tribunal of justice there was presided over by a judge whose learning and integrity cause his name and memory to be revered by every Alabamian who appreciates the value of such attributes in judicial character.

IV

[May 23, 1873]

[Rev. Joseph Harley] was the first man that ever preached the gospel in this country. He was a Methodist. We wish we could give some further account of one whose voice was heard "crying in the wilderness," but we have been unable to obtain any further information. Perhaps some reader may yet furnish it. The first church was on the Attabbee, on the old Columbia road, near where Mr. [Thomas Robinson] now lives.

Mr. [John Bartley] is said to have been the first man who ever taught a school in the country. We make these statements, in respect to Mr. Harley, and Mr. Bartley upon the information of Mr. Green Beauchamp and Mr. [John Whitehurst]. The latter was eighty years old on the 10th of March last. He emigrated from Twiggs county, Georgia, and settled on the Choctawatchee river, in what is now Dale county, on the 6th of January, 1819. There was then a block house on the west side of the river, erected there by Jackson's army, and the settlement was known as the block house settlement. The block house stood for many years after Samuel Walden and Pillitier Whitehurst, brother of

John, came together, and they were for some time the only people in that part of the county, except one Ellison, who preceded them but a few days. There was a sunken flat in the river, which had been used by Jackson's army in crossing to or from Pensacola. This flat Ellison had already raised, when the Whitehursts and Walden arrived, and it was used for many years after in crossing the river. Ellison remained in the country only about a year.

In 1826 the people undertook to cut a road from about where Mr. Matthew Fenn, now lives to Eufaula. About three hundred men black and white got together for the purpose. John Purifoy, who married a sister of Hon. Judge S. Williams, was the overseer. Luke Bennett's son, Ryan, a well known and highly respected citizen now living among us, was of the party, although not then old enough to be liable to road duty. Allen V. Robinson, who has taught three generations of us, "how to dance," and who can do it yet about as well as ever, was also with this company of engineers. They worked along merrily and without interruption, cutting what is now the road from Eufaula to Clayton, till they got to the Barbour creek. It was called the Baba then, which was seven years before the county got its name; but, as we stated heretofore, that was an abbreviation of the Indian name, Faukababa, meaning grape vine creek. The working party struck the creek about fifty yards below where the upper bridge now stands. They dug down the bank on the other side and some blacks, and a few of the whites crossed over; among the latter, Noah A. Tyson and Peleg Green. They had barely got across when suddenly a frightful yell arose on this side of the creek. That yell, or war whoop some say it was, came from more than a thousand hostile Indians hitherto concealed in the level pine woods, where Rev. Mr. Reeves plantation now is. Those who had crossed over evidently thought it was the latter kind of vocal exercise on the part of the aborigines, for it is said they promptly made good time in placing themselves on the Clayton side of Faukababa. Peleg boiled out of the creek gesticulating wildly, and rushing up the bank, undertook an explanation to the astonished pioneers. But Peleg was a stutterer; and on this occasion he is said to have excelled himself in that sort of elocution. His gestures were highly animated and expressive, but as to articulation, he seemed unable to do justice to the sub-

ject, and, after five or six most energetic efforts, he just gave it up and made no spoken remarks at all. Some of the whites, however, desiring to see as well as hear, crossed over and found the piney woods swarming with highly excited Indians, armed with guns and tomahawks. They were yelling, jumping the logs, and capering about in a very unpleasant manner altogether. It seemed impossible to prevent their attacking some blacks of our party who, somehow hemmed up on this side, had their axes drawn to defend themselves. Suddenly however a chief spoke and the Indians subsided in an instant and were as mute as mice. The Linksters (Indian interpreters) then came forward from their party and said that John Winslett (a white man who lived among them near the Uchee creek) had told them that we were going to cut that road to their Eufaula town, that they did not like it—that it should not be done—and that we must come no further unless we could show an order from the Great Father at Washington city. That order the whites could not produce; and, as they had neither guns nor tomahawks about them, and had come out not to fight but to work the roads, they concluded to withdraw. So, after one bold fellow on our side, a man named Martin Johnston, had mounted a log and indulged himself in some protracted and stentorian profanity in respect to the President, mankind in general, and Indians in particular, the whites picked up their tools and retired in disgust, expressing on their way home, no very complimentary opinions of either the enterprise or the sociability of the then inhabitants of this fair city.

Soon after this a lieutenant from Fort Mitchell, where was then a garrison of United States troops, came down and had a talk with these Eufaulians—told them the road would benefit instead of injuring them, bringing goods into their country, etc. etc. The Indians became reconciled. Their hostility was changed to co-operation, and they joined the white party when it returned to work, helped them to fix the ford on the Baba and cut the road into Eufaula town.

V

[May 24, 1873]

In 1817 there was an Indian disturbance on this and the

other side of the river, and the people hurried into the fort at Fort Gaines. Some were killed on the Georgia side, who were buried ten or twelve miles northeast of Fort Gaines. One man on this side named Keith, being a little tardy in getting in, was killed in an Indian house, on what is now the Jim Bennett plantation in Henry county. Mr. John L. Williams, a highly respected citizen of this county, gives us this information. He, then but a boy, was in the fort at the time, having come from the Georgia side. The garrison was then commanded by Lieut. Sands, a one armed officer. A party of soldiers crossed into Alabama and went down the river scouting. They came upon Keith, mortally wounded, and carried him to Fort Gaines, where he lived but a few hours and was buried. Mr. Williams saw him breathe his last. All the settlers on the Alabama side went into the fort, and the country over here was depopulated of whites; The men were mustered into service, and they and their families drew rations from the government. After some months, quiet was restored and the settlers returned to their abandoned homes.

2

It may interest some to know that in the duel between Crowder and Fannin mentioned heretofore—the first affair of that sort in this country—Jo Reed was the second of Crowder, and Col. Irvin that of Fannin. Braddock Williams, a brother of John L. was on the ground and witnessed the affair.

Williamston

Was settled in 1820. In that year William Williams, father of John L. Williams, William Bush, Jared Williams, a Mr. Copeland and John Danner came in and settled there. These were the first settlers. Danner was a German, a blacksmith and put up the first blacksmith shop in Barbour county. He was an industrious and useful man. Others come in soon after. The place took its name from the fact that a good many Williamses were settled there. William Williams put up the first cotton gin in this county.

The first steamboat that ever navigated the Chattahoochee was "The Fanny," a high pressure boat. She landed at Apalachi-

ola in 1826, and made a trip up the river.

In 1827 there was a sort of a famine among the Indians. They were about to starve. Some of their chiefs, among them Onushajo, chief of Oakeeknee town (which, by the way, was the name of the town at Prospect Bluff, instead of Chitteeoknee), and Tustenughajo, from Eufaula town, came to Green Beauchamp's store at Williamston, representing to Mr. B. their necessities, and tried to buy corn. They said their people were suffering, but they had no means to pay, except by giving an order on Col. John Crowell, the Indian agent at Fort Mitchell. Mr. Beauchamp agreed to risk it and made a bargain with the chiefs to let them have one thousand bushels of corn. In a few days, about three hundred Indians came on foot, and on Ponies, and packed off the corn. Beauchamp then rode horseback from Williamston for Fort Mitchell and presented the order to Col. Crowell who accepted it in writing, but had no money to pay it then. Mr. Beauchamp returned and sold the order to Hardridge, who had an Indian family and lived with the Indians at Oakaocknee town. Mr. Beauchamp got some money and a negro woman and child for the order. The negro woman is still living and remains with her former master. Mr. Hardridge is said to have been an honorable and hospitable man. He treated one well who went to his home, but his Indian family never appeared at the table.

VI

[June 5, 1873]

The Indians

Our friend, Green Beauchamp, Esq. furnishes us with the following interesting account of some of the habits and customs of the aboriginal inhabitants of our county. He witnessed in 1812, at Oakeeochknee town, a

Green Corn Dance

There was no particular day set apart for this festival. It was an annual one, and celebrated as soon as the new corn

crop was fit to be used in roasting ear; which of course in this country was usually not before July. The place selected on this occasion was about two hundred yards from the Chattahoochee river. The ground was swept off clean, a circle of about thirty yards in diameter made, and a skinned pole, about twenty feet high, set up in the centre. The Indians, men, women and children in their best clothes, and what whites were present, stood about talking and laughing as at any other gathering for pleasure. Presently the young men and warriors quietly disappeared from the crowd. After a little there was heard from many sides around, a whoop or yell, such as only an Indian can make. This was answered from all part of the campus. The young men and warriors then reappeared and advanced, occasionally yelling or whooping. When in full view of the spectators they commenced some unaccountable and indescribable gymnastics. They were stripped now to the breech clout, and painted from head to foot with stripes and spots. After they got through with their capering they made a rush for the crowd, coming in from all directions; and when they reached it, without making any stop, moved rapidly off in Indian file to the river, and all jumped in. They soon returned, with the paint washed off and in their usual dress. Dinner was then eaten. It consisted of green corn, cooked in different ways and served in earthen vessels of different sizes, and also of dried beef and venison, which was prepared by being picked to pieces very fine in shreds, they resembled cut tobacco. It was however extremely nice and palatable. The food was served in earthen vessels shaped like a pumpkin or rather like an egg, being larger in the middle than at the top. Some were of the capacity of two gallons. The dinner table was a kind of scaffold. There were neither cups nor saucers, plates, knives nor forks, but an abundance of wooden spoons with which the green corn was eaten. The meat was taken with the fingers. No ardent spirits of any kind, and no beverage but water. At dinner, which was eaten about 1 o'clock, as well as during all the day, the whites who were present were treated by the Indians with the greatest kindness and attention.

After the feast was over, the show commenced. The spectators sat round on the edge of the circle, the inner space being kept clear as at a circus. The dancers, perhaps as many as

a hundred men and women, then entered the ring. There was no instrumental music, but much vocal, consisting of Indian songs rather rapidly ejaculated, and in which all the performers participated together. The songs were lively, but the faces of the singers at all times immoveably solemn and in earnest. The men dancers had a bunch, about the size of a peck of high land terrapin shells fastened to their backs just behind the hips, and these were so united as to hold shot or something else that incontinently rattled. The squaws had something equally capable of clatter, but whatever that was, was concealed beneath their dress. They would then dance round the centre pole, singing together, and with a step so regular and a time so perfect, that the noise of what hissed or rattled in their shells sounded like the escape pipe of a rapidly puffing steam engine.

Our informant, having spent a most pleasant day in the forest fifty years ago, with these children of the wilderness, then left them at a late hour in the evening, and knows not how long the amusements were protracted, not with what ceremonies they were brought to a conclusion.

VII

[June 14, 1873]

Attorneys at Law

James H. Smith and D. W. R. McRae were the first attorneys at law that settled in Henry county. They settled there about the year 1821. Smith was from North Carolina, and boarded in the family of Stephen Mathews, near Morgan's store where the first court was held. Smith did not remain in the county more than fifteen or eighteen months, when he returned to North Carolina, his former home. McRae was from St. Stephens, in the western part of the State, on the Tombigee river. While in Henry, he boarded in the family of the Rev. Angus McDaniel, in the lower part of the county, near where Gordon now is, McRae remained in the county about two years, and returned to St. Stephens. Mosly Baker was the next. He came

from Montgomery and boarded in the family of Stephen Mathews. He remained in the county but a short time, and returned to Montgomery. William Williamson was the next, and came about 1823. He was from this State somewhere near Selma. He settled at Attaway's store, the place that is now known as Old Columbia. E. M. Attaway was the founder of Columbia, and died there. Williamson was in the county about twelve months and unfortunately got into an altercation with Mr. Smith a most clever and amiable gentleman, who lost his life. Smith was a brother of the Hon. Thos T. Smith, who lives in Henry county. Williamson ran away and made his escape to Texas. Soon after he went there he became a politician and took an active part in the Texas revolution. There is a county in Texas named after him. He was a lame man, one leg being so much deformed that he had to wear a wooden one. "When I was in Texas," our informant writes us, "some seventeen or eighteen years ago, I enquired after him and heard that he lived in the town of Independence, in Washington county, where I had stayed the night before. I did not get to see him. They called him "Three legged Willie." They told me some anecdotes about him. When his opponents would push him hard and call him a murderer and other hard names, his reply would be that he never had killed but three men that he got. I have learned that he died a few years after I was there."

Physicians

The first resident physicians in Henry county were Thomas Sharp, Robert Scott and George Sargent. Dr. Sharp lived and practiced in the neighborhood where Thomas Robinson now lives. Dr. Scott in the lower part of the county, and Dr. Sargent at Attaway's store near Columbia. They were all here as early as 1823.

Ministers of the Gospel

Joseph Harley, and Angus McDaniel of the Methodist, and Jeremiah Kemball of the Baptist denomination, were the first preachers that settled in the county. Mr. Harley died near Tallahassee, the other two in Henry county.

Campmeetings

The first campmeeting was held in Henry county in 1823. It was held about eight miles above Columbia, in the neighborhood where Thomas Robinson now lives. A good many people from Florida were there.

Associations

The first was held about a mile below Columbia, on the Amassee creek.

Rev. John J. Triggs was the first missionary preacher that ever traveled in South eastern Alabama. Triggs was an Englishman. Rev. John Slade was the next. They were both of the Methodist denomination and were here in 1821-2.

VIII

[June 15, 1873]

Our Position with the Creek Indians

from 1814 to 1836

In accordance with a treaty of peace entered into between Gen. Jackson and the Creek Indians, on the 10th of August, 1814, the line was run from Fort Gaines, bearing north 45° west true meridian, called the old boundary line. It intersected Line Creek, in the present county of Bullock, and divided the county of Barbour as at present bounded into two nearly equal parts. By the treaty of [Fort Jackson] the Indians were to remain north of this line and east of the Coosa river. The country south of the boundary line was not immediately settled up by the whites, owing to the fact that it was but a narrow strip between the Creeks on the north and the Seminoles on the south, the latter of whom were still hostile to the United States, and were backed secretly by the Spaniards of Florida, and openly by the English, through the connivance of the Spanish officers. The close of the British war in 1815, and the Seminole war in 1817, having made this country safe from the invasions of the

Indians, pioneers began to enter the new territory. The country was beautiful and the land productive—combining, probably, as many of the elements of a good country, as any in the world. In consequence, its settlement was rapid, and in a few years the habitations of civilized white men appeared on every hilltop.

By the year 1836 the whites had become so numerous that they had about lost their fear of the Indians, and were consequently less disposed to respect any of the rights of their red neighbors. Many of the first settlers had come here for the purpose of trading with the Indians. The most successful of these had succeeded in buying a considerable quantity of the best lands of the reservations from them for a mere song. Seeing themselves gradually being swindled out of their hunting grounds, without a chance of redress, except within themselves, they became restless and irritable. The whites, confident of their strength, ceased to recognise the virtue of fortitude on the Chattahoochee river. The result of this was the bearance. The Creek war of 1836 was the consequence, inaugurated in this part of the State by the burning of Roanoke, a removal of the entire body of Creek Indians from the State. Some of these escaped during the progress of the war to the Seminoles in Florida, and the remainder at its close were sent to the Indian reservation in the west.

IX

[June 15, 1873]

Battle at Hobdy's Bridge

During the progress of the Creek war of 1836, the people in the southern part of the present county of Barbour, being constantly exposed to sudden attacks from the Indians, kept scouts riding over that country lying on Dry creek which empties into Pea river, and Cowikee creek which empties into Chattahoochee river; this seeming to be assumed as a neutral territory between the whites and Indians. These scouts were taken

from the militia or home guard, and those not on this duty held themselves in readiness to fly to their arms and meet the Indians whenever the scouts should report them as approaching.

In February 1836, a body of about seventy-five warriors were reported near where Anglin's bridge now is, coming cautiously down the river with their women and children. The militia in the neighborhood of Louisville, were called together under the command of Col. Jack Cooper, and scouts sent back to watch the Indians. They were moving down the swamp near the run of the river, the ground being more firm there than nearer the margin of the swamp. Col. Cooper went in camp near the residence of Harrel Hobdy just on the Pike side of the river, and soon after the Indians were discovered in camp, in the swamp opposite, and about two hundred yards above the confluence of Pea creek and Pea river. Their position was first indicated by the smoke of their encampment and afterwards by their noise, they not seeming to be at all uneasy as to their situation.

Next morning, Col. Cooper had his men up early getting breakfast and preparing their arms, the camp presenting a busy scene of preparation until after sunrise. There were one hundred and fifty men present. When they had eaten their breakfast and everything was ready, fifty men were sent to cross the river near the upper edge of the Hobdy place and come down on the Indians from the rear. They were put under the command of a man by the name of Head, an old frontiersman, and one who claimed to be well skilled in all of the arts of Indian warfare.

When the sun was about an hour high, Col. Cooper entered the swamp with his command of one hundred men. He went along the road until he arrived near the present western end of the bridge known as Hobdy's Bridge. Here he turned to the left and going about a hundred yards crossed the river on a log. After all had got across, observing as strict silence in the meanwhile as possible, the men were formed in line in two ranks. Three men were sent forward as videttes. When they had attained to the distance of seventy-five yards, the main line was ordered to forward, and the small band of one hun-

dred men, new to such scenes, cheerfully set forward to encounter an almost equal number of men nurtured from their infancy in the atmosphere of battle, and holding every advantage of position. It was afterwards discovered that the Indians had encamped near two large white oak logs, which, growing near together, in falling had fallen in opposite directions—making a splendid line of breastworks two or three hundred feet in length. To these they resorted on discovering the near approach of the whites. On arriving in one hundred yards of this natural breastwork, one of the videttes saw an Indian and fired, and each of the three protected themselves with a tree. The Indians fired no shot in return. Col. Cooper halted the main body at the firing of the vidette, but no answering shot coming from the Indians, curiosity impelled the men to go forward to see what had been the cause of the shot. About the time the main body reached the position of the videttes the Indians opened fire. With a yell and without ever stopping, the whites charged the Indians clear out of their breastworks and camp without a man having been wounded, and many of them hardly knowing that they were in a charge. There was a rich booty of articles, stolen or plundered from different parties, in the camp; but the victors were not after plunder. As soon as the men could be got in shape, they followed after the retreating Indians. Two hundred and fifty yards up the river they overtook them crossing a lagoon; some had crossed, others were crossing. The fight was renewed. The Indians, having recovered from their panic, and having a lagoon between them and the whites, fought much better. They shot nails altogether from their muskets, and these making a very loud, unearthly noise, rather demoralized the whites for a few minutes. For fifteen minutes the firing was pretty constant along the lagoon for two hundred yards. Soon word was passed down the line for Dr. Heron to come up the line to see Harrel Hobdy who was wounded. The doctor, who in the meantime had been using his gun to the very best advantage, immediately repaired to the point designated and found Mr. Hobdy behind a large tree with a flesh wound in the thigh, but, as it happened, not from a nail.

Seeing they could gain no possible advantage in a sharpshooting fight and those sent above under Head not having

yet made an appearance, the word was given to charge. Into the lagoon they plunged. On rising the opposite bank, they raised a yell and went right into the midst of the Indians. This was too much for them. They immediately began a hasty retreat, and the whites were unable to engage them again. Cooper was wounded in the last charge, making the total casualties on the part of the whites two wounded, none killed.

The Indians were not dispersed, but retreated down the river as rapidly as possible in a body, having lost their camp equipage, ponies and numberless articles they had plundered from whites who had been living on their reservations. Among other things in their possession was a quantity of calico and other articles taken from a store which had been plundered and burnt near where the present town of Midway is, the possession of which gave evidence that they were the same band that had whipped out Wellborn's command up in that neighborhood a few days before.

The same band were intercepted and again defeated by the Dale militia near Black's mill; at which point they left the swamp, and took to the hills, finally making their escape into Florida. Of this second battle and escape, if we can obtain sufficient information, we will give an account hereafter.

To return to the detachment, sent under Head to cross above and come down in rear of the Indians. They did finally until they arrived at the thick swamp, near the bank of the river, at which point Head decided that it was dangerous for them to go further. Said he was well acquainted with Indian habits, and they would not ask a better thing than to massacre the whole of them in that thick swamp. For some time, being the commander, Head's decision was adopted. Finally, Hart Ball stepped forward and called on all those who would to with him, according to the original plans, to step out and join him. About ten men did so, and they immediately crossed and started down on the east side, but owing to the delay, arrived at the scene of the engagement too late to take part in it, but not too late to share the honor of the victory.

X

[June 22, 1873]

Wellborn's Pea River Battle

From the fact that the squad of Indians, fought by Cooper's company of Louisville militia, exhibited such a determination to reach Florida, and from other facts, it was believed throughout the county in the spring of 1837 that all the Creek Indians intended to join the Seminoles. The Creeks were satisfied that they could only make peace with the whites by being removed to a reservation in the Indian Territory, beyond the Mississippi. But they further believed if they could join Billy Bowlegs in the everglades of Florida, they would be secure from further molestation by the United States. In consequence of the knowledge among the whites of this attended [sic] attempt by the Indians to cross into Florida, there was a general feeling of uneasiness from Pea river to the Chattahoochee, each settlement not knowing but that it might be in the line of the exodus. As a means of mutual protection a fort was built on the hills south of Beauchamps' mill, to which the neighbors all resorted at night, and at every alarm (and there were a great many amusing incidents from those alarms some of which may hereafter be recorded in these memoirs). Other arrangements were made in different parts of the county for protection from the expected visitation. Scouts were constantly kept out between the settlements and the Indians.

About the 10th of March, a considerable band of them under the leadership of Enotichopka were discovered near the intersection of Dry creek and Pea river, traveling very much as the band which Cooper had encountered six weeks before. There were supposed to be two hundred warriors and about the same number of women and children. Supposing they had left all the United States troops behind them they were not afraid of any serious opposition from the whites. The alarm was sounded however, and all the volunteer companies in reach were called on to assist in driving them back. Successive reports of the burning of different dwellings near Pea river, commencing near Anglin's bridge and extending down toward

Hobdy's bridge, sufficiently revealed the direction which they were taking. Enotichopka's progress was discernable at a distance by the conflagrations of the dwellings near his line of march, just as his more christian imitator, William Tecumseh Sherman, illuminated his march through Georgia and South Carolina.

In two days three companies were in camp near Hobdy's bridge. Capt. Jeff. Buford's company from Pike, camped near H. Hobdy's on the west side of the river, Capt. Wm. Wellborn's company, from Barbour, and Capt. Morrison's company from Georgia, camped on the Barbour or east side of the river. Beside these, there were forty or fifty men unorganized citizens of the surrounding country, present, with the intention of taking part in the expected conflict. In all, there were two hundred and fifty men. Scouts sent out reported the Indians encamped about two miles above the confluence of Pea creek, and Pea river, near the run of the river, and in the present plantation of Matthew Fenn. High water from recent rains had impeded their progress. They were encamped on an island in the swamp, and it was impossible to get to them without wading.

A council of war was held. It was agreed that Captain Buford should make the first attack, on the Pike side, and should try to draw the Indians out of their camp, which was supposed to be fortified, and while the warriors were following up Buford, believing they were driving the whole force, Wellborn, with the remainder of the force, was to attack and capture the camp, containing the old men and women and children, and then the two commands proceed to annihilate the warriors. It was splendidly planned, could not have been better; and although the result was very much as desired, the details did not occur according to arrangement.

Early in the morning Captain Buford left his camp near Harrel Hobdy's place, with eighty men well trained in the use of firearms. About eight o'clock he arrived opposite the Indian camp. He dismounted and formed his men on foot, leaving a few with the horses to guard them. The loud talking of the Indians, and the barking of their dogs, could now be distinctly heard by the men. Deployed as skirmishers, the command

moved forward through mud and water frequently to their waists, every man resolved to do his duty.

The Indians seem to have become aware of the intended attack. Before reaching the run of the river firing began, and soon became very rapid. After making a respectable stand, Buford, according to the programme, ordered his men to fall back slowly. The men at first obeyed his order and acted finely for about a hundred yards, firing and falling back to the next tree. They began to move faster, and a little faster, until they reached the edge of the swamp, notwithstanding every effort of their brave commander, their retreat had become a complete stampede, two hundred Indians yelling at their heels. Some did not take time to get their horses, but kept in the thickets next the swamp, running for life. Some of those who got on their horses ran them to Monticello, eight miles distant, and still felt unsafe. The Indians pursued about two miles. There was one casualty only. Occhee Bill Davis, not being able to keep silent drew the fire to himself, and received a ball in the mouth. That Indian shot well at a noise.

In the meantime, Captain Wellborn was preparing to perform his part of the programme. He left his camp early, but was compelled to go up to the mill (now King's mill) to cross. He left a detachment of twenty men at the bridge, to prevent the Indians from escaping down the river. Owing to the circuitous route which had been compelled to take, he arrived at the camp on the east side too late, and after the most favorable opportunity had passed. Most of the warriors had already returned from the pursuit of Buford's retreating force.

Wellborn dismounted his men, and hurriedly formed them, with his company in the centre, Morris' company on the right, and the citizens on the left. They were deployed, and the advance began. As before stated, the swamp was overflowed, and as soon as the whites entered it they were compelled to wade, and water being waist deep in most places, though generally about knee deep. When the line arrived within two hundred yards of the camp, the Indians opened fire. The centre protected themselves with trees and returned the fire, shooting at the noise and smoke, in the absence [sic] of any visible object.

The right and left wings, not having anything to oppose them, continued to advance, until they arrived near the run of the river—the one above and the other below the camp, thus enclosing it with a semicircle. The whole line was then ordered to charge, which they did in splendid style, capturing the camp and its entire contents, with the loss of only two men killed, Bradly and Wellborn, the captain's son; and two wounded, Hartwell Ball, one of the volunteer citizens; and one of Captain Morris' company, name not remembered. B. F. Dennis had on an Indian shot-bag, and to prevent its getting wet, had it thrown over his shoulder, and suspended against his breast. A ball struck this and knocked Frank down, and for several moments he was satisfied that he was perforated by a rifle ball. He jumped up, however, exclaiming, "did you see that?" and went gallantly forward with the rest. He has often been heard to remark that he could feel distinctly the point at which the ball came out on the opposite side.

For some time after the capture of the camp an indiscriminate slaughter of women, children, old men and warriors ensued. The killed were estimated at one hundred and fifty, though the number was never known accurately. Some were killed in the river and the bodies of others thrown in, so that no reliable count could be made. No warriors were made prisoners. The women and children captured were made slaves by the captors. We can all remember seeing some of them, and indeed one or two of them remain amongst us even to the present day. There is one, we believe, still living in Eufaula.

The band was completely broken up. No subsequent effort to collect the scattered remnants was ever discovered. Several individual stragglers were from time to time found by the whites and killed, within a few weeks afterwards. It was supposed that very few, if any of them ever made their way to Florida. The disastrous result of this attempt to reach the Seminoles made it the last by that route. Soon afterwards they permitted themselves to be removed to the hunting grounds set apart for them beyond the Mississippi, in the Indian Territory.

XI

[June 29, 1873]

We are very much obliged to our friend Green Beauchamp, Esq., for the following interesting letter relative to the auld land syne of this country:

SAILING VESSELS ASCENDING CHATTAHOOCHEE
RIVER.

Capt. John Logarthy, an Italian, commanded the first sailing vessel, a small schooner, that ascended the Chattahoochee, whose name is not recollected. He and his comrades came upon a treaty expedition. They brought with them such articles as were suitable for a new country, sugar, coffee, salt, tobacco, etc and retailed them out to the people on both sides of the river, at reasonable prices, which was quite a convenience at that time. They ascended the river as high up as Howard's landing, ten or twelve miles above Columbia. The captain was unfortunate. On his return trip, before he got beyond the limits of Henry county, he was charged with killing one of his men, was arrested and delivered over to Sheriff Morgan, for safe keeping until court. There was no prison house at that time in the county, and the sheriff had to shackle him and keep him as best he could, he let him hobble about the yard and kept a watch over him. One day while the prisoner was hobbling about with chains he unfortunately came in contact with a vicious cow, that made battle, much to the horror and consternation of the sea captain, who declared that he would rather be in twenty storms, at sea, than encounter a mad cow and be in chains. The captain was however not much injured, but frightened out of his senses. Court came on and no prosecutor appeared, and he was set at liberty. The affair however pretty much ruined him pecuniarily. The writer saw him many years after that, running a little barge from Apalachicola up the Chippola river to Marianna.

There were other small sailing crafts that came up Chattahoochee after that, trading like the first. Daniel Pynes father of the Hon. James Pynes, was one of the early settlers in the

neighborhood of Gordon, Henry County. He was not only a good citizen, but a good mechanic. He was the first man that ever manufactured hats in that county, which was a great convenience to the early settlers.

Simon Smith was another early settler in the neighborhood of Gordon. If he did not have cattle on a thousand hills, he came as near having a thousand head as any man in that county. He was one of the most benevolent and charitable men the writer ever knew. There is no doubt he supplied more people with bread without a prospect of reward, than all the people in the county, put together. Benjamin Lewis was an early settler in the neighborhood of Columbia. He built a lot of mills on the Amassee creek. His was the first saw mill put up in the county. Special mention has been made of these parties because they were public benefactors. They all died where they first settled in the county, and have numerous descendants in Barbour county. The early settlers of Henry county were generally a good class of citizens.

XII

[July 17, 1873]

Old Settlers

We are glad to see another interesting article from this pen. We shall avail ourselves of the opportunity to reproduce it for our readers. By the way in respect to our inaccuracies we ask old settlers to read over our Early Times in Barbour. We did not say at all that the county was first settled in 1818. We only said that Mr. Green Beauchamp first settled there in that year. This is how it ran. "Mr. G. B. was one of the earliest settlers in this country," (not the earliest). "In 1818 he crossed the Chattahoochee at Fort Gaines" etc. "There were, he assures us, not a hundred people in the whole country which now makes eight counties" etc. Does not this admit that there were settlers (not a hundred however), here before him? Than as to the sofka, Beauchamp sticks to it, there was no ley in it. So do

other old men who were among the Indians; so that is not a settled question. Mr. John R. Robertson says there was no ley in it. Now, as to the line, we had not made that statement when Old Settlers questioned our accuracy. That was made afterwards so "old settlers" cannot properly adduce this in evidence of the correctness of their criticism for that would be prophetic rather than historic. We submit then that there is no evidence yet offered of inaccuracy. We will look into this boundary line, but we are inclined to think old settlers is correct. We will try to obtain a copy of the treaty and give our readers the positive figures on the subject.

XIII

[July 20, 1873]

A Stampede in a Church

In the early part of the summer of 1836, our Indian troubles commenced. Although the Indians had sold their lands to the whites, there were a good many of them still in the country. They were dissatisfied at the idea of leaving the country, and committed hostility upon our people that had lawfully settled on the lands once owned by them. The most of the people that had settled on these lands became alarmed and got out of that country. Some went one way, and some another, several families came to my place at Williamston, among others Milton and Isham Browder, then single men, and occupied my gin house and other out buildings that could be spared. Our immediate neighborhood felt no uneasiness, considering that from the thickness of our settlement, we were able to defend ourselves should any demonstration be made. We took care to keep our powder dry. On Sunday, 16th May, 1836, the Rev. W. B. Neal, a Methodist preacher, had an appointment to preach at New Hope church about a mile and half from Williamston. The house was a good sized building. Mr. Neal was a popular preacher with almost everybody, there was a large congregation out to hear him. Services had begun, the preacher had just commenced reading out his text when a horse's feet were heard com-

ing at full speed. The preacher paused a moment and Cooly Mann, who lived in Eufaula, darted into the church yard and bawled out in a startling voice, that Roanoke had been burnt by the Indians the night before and Irwinton, now Eufaula, would soon fare the same fate, and no doubt, but the whole country would be overrun by Indians in a very short time. Instantly a general rush was made for the doors—the crowd did not stand on the order of going, but got out like hornets from hornet's nest. A council of war was held in the yard, and decided that every man who could leave home should meet at Williamston at 1 o'clock p.m., with such arms as he had or could get and march to Irwinton immediately. At the appointed hour there was about one hundred men on the ground. Rev. J. R. Turner was selected as Captain M. E. Bush, father of our respected citizen, David A. and his brothers, was made Lt. and so on. Before sun down we were in Irwinton to defend the place. No Indians made their appearance. We reconnoitered about a day or two and were dismissed until further notice.

XIV

[July 20, 1873]

(From the Henry County Register, Abbeville, Ala., July 16, 1873)

EDITOR REGISTER:

I am not worth much money, but I will bet my pile—and I believe I can get some backers, that there never were two battles of Hobdy's bridge, or Pea River, or Pea Creek or whatever, it may be called, Head fighting one as related by the Times man, and Wellborn fighting the other as related by me: and I'll go the biggest kind of a blind that the Times man can't find any living witness to the fact that there were.

“Shoot, Luke, or give up your gun.”

Thos.Mathis

Well, here goes, Dr. E. M. Heron of Louisville, Alabama, one of our best citizens and once a member of the House of representatives from Barbour, is living, and was present in the flesh in the first fight, and actually dressed a wound received therein by Mr. Harrell Hobdy, a valued citizen of Pike county, now deceased, who also often represented his county in the legislature. So Luke has shot, and we think brought down his game. If this statement, which we make on excellent authority, is not correct, and this paragraph should meet the eye of Dr. Heron, we hope he will correct us, and then we shall surrender without a word. We wish it however, distinctly understood that we were not in either battle ourself, and that our allegations are made only "upon information and belief," but barring accidents, we expect that we are right. We shall soon see. Both battles however, were fought in 1837 and not in 1836.

XV

[July 20, 1873]

Battle at Martin's Field

As but slight mention of this battle, which was fought about three miles this side of Midway, in now Bullock county, has been made by any of your correspondents, I will only say, that I was on the battle ground the day after the fight took place. We buried Mr. Walter Patterson, who was the only white man killed in the fight, Judge W. R. Cowan one of the best men that ever lived in this county lost his left arm. One or two others whose names I cannot recollect, I think were slightly wounded. Four or five horses lay dead on the battle field. The whites got the worst of this fight. There was not a large number engaged on either side, but many more Indians than whites. If there were any Indians killed it was never known. Gen. Wm. Wellborn was the commander of the whites.

ALABAMA MAN SHOT BY GEORGIA TROOPER

Mr. Josiah Flourney, father of Gen. Thos. Flourney and grandfather of Mr. S. J. Flourney of Eufaula, and Mr. Carson Winslett rode up to Flourney's plantation, called afterwards the Wales place, on business connected with the plantation and while there saw some Georgia troops on the opposite side of the river. To get a better view of them they rode to the bluff, when the Georgia troops commenced firing on them for Indians. Winslett was shot in the neck, the ball entering just above the collar bone and running round the neck until it got opposite where it entered, and lodging until cut out. Winslett was knocked off his horse. Flourney hurried him away as fast as he could; got him on his horse again and brought him to Irwinton. Winslett was badly hurt but recovered. The ball was cut out by Dr. Cleveland, a dentist then living in the town.

I thing Mr. Mathis will have his bet taken up. If I was a betting man, I believe I would do it myself. There is no doubt in the world there were two separate battles at, or near, Hobdy's bridge.

XVI

[Aug. 1, 1873]

It has already been stated that the first settlement made in the territory that is now Barbour county, was in 1820. After that time the country, or the best part of it was settled up very rapidly. I don't allude to that part that was included in the Indian country. It was some two or three years, after the first settlements before the lands were surveyed—when a man would move in he would, select his claim and go to work. The settlers rarely if ever, interfered with each others claim, and in this way they all got along peaceable. It was a very common thing, after the first few years, when a new comer would move in for him to buy out the claim of somebody, who knew all about the country, and could soon suit himself in another place. This state of things existed until 1828, when the lands were put on

the market by the Government. The sale took place at the land office in Sparta, Conecuh county, Alabama. The land in this country was first offered in the western part of the county and extended east within about one mile of where the town of Clayton now is and there stopped. The balance of the land in the county was put on the market about one year afterwards. By this time quite a number of slaves had been brought into the country. The people were prosperous and many of them had made large farms by buying out the claims around them. Buying and selling claims was quite a common business, much more so than buying and selling lands at this time. When these lands sales came on, the settlers that had money attended them, they apprehended no opposition among themselves, but when they got to Sparta, they found land speculators there who had the Nos. of these lands, demanding hush money to hold off. Some parties made terms with them, others refused and let lands be knocked off to the highest bidder. Some said they would fight it out. A man by the name of Jones bid on S. G. B. Adams land. Adams struck Jones with a stick. Jones drew a pistol and shot him in the breast. Adams had on a thick coat buttoned around him, the ball passed through several folds of the thick cloth, which prevented it from doing any damage. This fight caused great excitement and threatened to be a serious matter as both parties had strong friends. The sales were stopped for the day, the matter however, was settled and the sales proceeded quietly. When the next sales came on about a year after this there was no opposition, every man that had money got his land at one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, the Government price. There were men there with money to advance to those that had none, and take a lien on the lands until the advance was paid. Quite a considerable business was done in that way. Philip I. Weaver, of Selma, and others were there and made advances as above stated. The lands were offered in tracts of eighty acres; no more nor less. The writer was at Sparta at both these sales, and saw Jones when he shot Adams. Not a man in South east Alabama ever owned one foot of land until the first sales as mentioned above.

XVII

[Aug. 17, 1873]

In June, 1827, I engaged in a little speculation. I had in Henry County a few hundred bushels of corn that I had made there before I left the county. There was no market for it there. I hired a pole boat from Anthony McCulloh, the founder of Franklin, who lived where Franklin now is, manned it with a crew about half white, and half negroes, carried it down to where the Wingate place is now, bought a few more hundred bushels of corn, and loaded her for Columbus, Ga., which place had just commenced settling up. I put my boat in charge of Capt. William Durham of Henry county, saw her under way, and left for my home at Williamston. A man by the name of Phillips had been peddling in the neighborhood of Williamston, sold out his goods, and was going to Georgia. I took a seat in his wagon, and we set out for Ft. Mitchell, where I was to meet my boat. We went on by where Mt. Andrew now is, Midway, and intersected the old Federal road at Lewis' Stand in the Creek Nation.

Kendall and John Lewis lived there. Both had Indian families. They were the sons of Daniel Lewis, who lived one mile west of Clayton at that time. He came into possession of a considerable amount of lands in that neighborhood; owned the forty acres where Clayton is situated and made a donation of it to the county for the purpose for which it is now used. Phillips went on to Georgia and I stopped at the house of Chilley McIntosh. He was the son of Gen William McIntosh, a half-breed Indian, that was killed by his own people for selling a part of the Creek lands to the United States. Chilley was a tall, fine looking man well educated, and he dressed like a white man. His Indian blood was very perceptible. He was married to a white wife, who was the daughter of C. pt. S. Porter, who settled the place near Clayton where Matthew Fenn now resides; and lived there at that time. (1827) Porter had been a Captain in the United States army—was a very intelligent and clever man, but had let liquor get the upper hand of him. When McIntosh and other Indians went off to Arkansas, Porter and his family went with them. Failing to meet my boat at Fort Mitch-

ell as I expected, I put off down the river on foot in search of it. Staid all night at old John Winslett's. He had an Indian family at that time. John Winslett was the father of Martin, Carson Samuel and Joel Winslett and two daughters, that lived many years in this county. They were his children by a former wife, a lady who died in Henry county. Joel Winslett built the first jail that was built in Clayton. Carson Winslett was the first white man that settled at what is now Eufaula. His widow survives him, and is now living in the neighborhood of Wesley Bishop Esq. in this county. On this trip I saw Neah motla a celebrated Indian. Winslett and I were walking along and we saw an Indian sitting on a horse talking to another Indian, who was on foot. Winslett asked "do you know that Indian on the horse." I said no, and he said that is Neah motla, as he called it. I met my boat about ten miles below Fort Mitchell, got aboard and went on to Columbus. The river was very low and it was hard work to get up; I very soon sold out the freight to Col. John Woolfolk and his nephew Sowell Woolfolk. The latter became a prominent politician in Columbus, and was killed by a lawyer named Camp, in a duel. We delivered our freight, settled up our business and all hands went up on the Bluff to a little store to take some refreshments, when a painful scene occurred. The store-keeper was a nice, middle aged man rather under the medium size. There was a big bully looking rowdy there, that appeared to be under the influence of liquor. Without the slightest provocation he commenced cursing the boat hand. He was standing in the store door at the time. Capt. Durham was in the house. He went for the fellow in good earnest, and giving him a shove, landed him his full length in the yard, and jumped out himself, but did not touch him while he was down. The latter got up, ran into the store, went behind the counter among the hardware to get something to fight with. The store keeper went to him, put his hand on him, and told him to get from behind his counter. He immediately turned upon the store keeper, and completely bit off one of his ears. He then made his way out of the house by a back door. The enraged store-keeper got hold of a double-barrelled gun, and fired both barrels at him as he made off. But the poor fellow was so excited that he probably missed. If he hit him, it was not known while we staid. The brute dodged off

into a thick corn field near by, and was out of sight. This occurred on the 4th day of July, 1829. We soon returned to the river, got aboard of our craft, and floated off down stream, all lamenting what had happened.

I was landed at an Indian campfire near the mouth of the Faka ba ba creek about midnight. I remained with the Indians until morning and then walked home to Williamston. I will take this occasion [sic] to correct an error I made in a former article about the first trip the steamer boat Fanny made up the river. It was the latter part of the year 1827 or the first part of the year 1828 and not in 1826 that she came up the river.

XVIII

[Undated]

Indian Houses

The better class had small snug hewed log houses, the logs being very small. They were notched down very close and tight. These cabins had narrow sheds on each side, and doors only large enough to admit one person at a time. The floors were of hewed timber. The finishing touch of the roof was always pine bark. They had a great art of peeling the bark off a green pine. They would girdle the tree in two places, about four feet apart, make an incision with a tomahawk from one ring to the other, sharpen the end of a pole and then strip off a sheet of bark as white as paper and as sound as tin. That bark was put on the tops of houses to finish the covering, and it answered the purpose well. There were social distinctions among them as among all people, many of the poorer class had no houses and nothing but pine bark camps. The Indians slept in the open air in the summer under sheds made for that purpose. Their bedding was made of cane mats. They slept in the houses or camps in winter, with cane mats and blankets for bedding.

Polygamy was not prohibited, but not much practiced.

Better Class and Chiefs Honest

On one occasion Mr. Beauchamp had his store house at Williamston broken open and a number of articles of merchandise stolen, as was supposed by negroes or Indians; by which it was not known until about three weeks after, when three of four chiefs came up and returned to him every article of the stolen goods. They stated that when they saw the goods they knew they were stolen, and made the Indian thief confess where he got them. They assured Mr. Beauchamp that they, had punished him so severely as would entirely satisfy him. The better classes seemed to be decent and cleanly, while the lower ones were filthy. The latter were often seen to find employment for their teeth in something that they captured from their children's heads.

Sofka was the standard food used by the common Indians, in fact the Indians nearly lived on sofka. It was made of corn, beaten up about as fine as rice, and boiled in clear water without salt. They would have an earthen pot full of this food which they set up in the middle of the house. A half dozen of them sat round it with one large wooden spoon in the pot. One would take a spoonful, put it back and then give the spoon handle a fillip with the finger just hard enough to send it round to the next, and so on until it come back to the first again; and that was the way they took their meals, and they entertained their visitors in the same style. There were however, some exceptions to this rule. They were inordinately fond of whisky and tobacco, and never failed to beg for them if there was the smallest prospect in the world of getting them.

XIX

[Undated]

In the year 1833, some ten or a dozen families settled at Irwinton. Three or four small stores were opened there, a hotel put up a flat built to cross the river in &c. As they were all mere adventurers, everything done, was on a small, cheap

scale. The road from Clayton to that place was then open, also one from the neighborhood of Williamston. Merchandise for the back country was nearly all landed there from the boats. Cotton was sent there for shipment down the river. Whites and Indians all lived there quietly and peaceable together. The lands belonged to the Indians at that time.

Some parties concluded to put up a warehouse for profit, and the convenience of the people in the back country. The frame of the warehouse was put up, pine poles, peeled, were substituted for scantlings in the building. Before, however, the house was weatherboarded and covered, John Austell, U. S. Marshal for Alabama, with a squad of United States soldiers, paid them a visit. The warehouse was felled to the ground by the soldiers with axes and Frank Pugh's house burned. That was all damage done to property or to any citizens of that place. Col. Austell stopped at the little hotel and showed no disposition to be harsh with the citizens. The parties that were building the warehouse foolishly concluded they would seek redress by having the officer in command of the soldiers arrested for the damage to the warehouse. They got a magistrate in the old part of the county to issue a warrant, which was put in the hands of S. G. B. Adams, a resolute, fool-hardy kind of a fellow to make the arrest. The officer was apprized of what was on hand and ordered a sentinel not to let Adams approach him. Adams however, notwithstanding he had heard the order, did not hesitate, but went on and undertook to pass the sentinel, when the soldier pricked him in the breast with his bayonet, making a pretty severe flesh wound. That put a stop to things so far as the officer and soldiers were concerned and soon afterwards they left. But among some of the citizens themselves, there was a little tug of war that grew out of the visit of the soldiers, which ended with a few knock downs and sore heads. Some parties believed that others had instigated the trouble they had had. Capt. Henry Allen justly or unjustly, was suspected of having something to do with it and Frank Pugh struck him over the head with a handspike making a terrible cut. One big fellow named Grant, able to whip two common sized men, was implicated, and some of them to use a common phrase went for him and got him hemmed, but he gave them leg-bail and made his escape, by jumping off the

bluff at the highest point into the river and swimming across into Georgia. He was the only man that left the place on account of that affair. He never did return. As for the soldiers burning the place and the citizens threatening to get up a fight with them, that is all without foundation.

XX

[Undated]

Before Southeastern Alabama was settled by the whites, "Old Settlers" correctly remarked that the country was only inhabited by the "Indians, wild beasts and owls." This wild game afforded abundance of fine sport for the white settler, who was fond of the chase, and there were but few who did not participate in it more or less. Among these wild animals, the meanest and most troublesome was the wolf. To get rid of this pest we would make up large hunting parties, go out in the unsettled parts of the country, and camp out one, two, and sometimes three days, to catch the young wolves with dogs, and shoot the old ones. But the most effectual way of destroying the old wolves was to trap them in pens made for that purpose. We did not like to resort to poison, for fear of killing our dogs. Dogs were like the Irishman's dram, they were everything. In these hunts we often killed deer and smaller game, anything that came to hand. But one of the most interesting hunts that the writer was ever engaged in was a panther hunt.

A party of us in 1822 made up a camp hunt on the Attaabbe creek in Henry county. Staid out one night; next morning, just after leaving camp, before the hunters began to separate, our dogs scented the carcass of a large buck that had been killed the over night by panthers. The dogs soon conducted us to the carcass covered up entirely with leaves and pine straw. A part of the carcass was not consumed, with a large head of horns. The dogs clawed the ground, raised their bristles, and soon gave us to understand which direction the game had gone. We held them back, inspected the premises, and then told them to go. They made for a large swamp nearly on the

creek. The hunters flanked off in different directions, and in less than two hours we came up with the game. We used mostly brass-mouthed British muskets in such a hunt. Of course they were flint and steel, this being long before the days of percussion caps. There were rifles in the country, but these were for still hunting. We killed two large panthers. One was up a tree and was shot out of it. The other I killed with my musket. The panther was on the ground at bay and surrounded by dogs. It was in a thick place on the bank of the creek, and I went up very close, as near as twenty yards, and fired a load of buck shot in the breast. He fell back dead into the creek. This was glory enough for one day, and we made off home with our trophies.

XXI

[Undated]

As has been stated in your columns heretofore, Gen. Jackson, in accordance with the stipulations of a treaty, entered into between the United States and the Creek Indians on the 10th of August, 1814, surveyed and located what was known as the "Old boundary line," running straight from Fort Gaines, Ga., to Line Creek in Bullock county. This creek, which flows into the Tallapoosa, then became the line between the whites and the Indians, and from this fact derived its name. For many years after the first settlements in Alabama, all the country from Line creek to the Ocmulgee river belonged exclusively to the Indians. No white person was allowed to settle among them, unless he had a permit from our government to establish stage stands and houses of entertainment for travelers on the "Old Federal road" as it was called, that ran through the nation. The road extended from Fort Hawkins, now East Macon, on the Ocmulgee; crossing the Flint river at Fort Lawrence, the Chattahoochee at Fort Mitchell, Line creek at Lucas's store and passed through Mount Meigs and down into Butler county, and on. Fort Perry was between the Flint and Chattahoochee rivers. The Federal road was the great thoroughfare for the migration from Virginia, the two Carolinas, and

Georgia, that was pouring into the promised land of Alabama. The travel to and from Southeast Alabama followed the road that crossed the river at Fort Gaines, and reached the "Old Federal road" at Fort Perry in now Talbot county. Here a man, named Drewry Spain kept a house of entertainment for travelers, widely known as "Spain's Stand." Once upon a time, fifty-two years ago, I journeyed along this latter road from Henry county back into the white settlement of Georgia: and I will relate a little adventure that befelled me on the way. It was in the year 1821. I was traveling in company with two other persons, a man and his wife. They were in a one horse Jersey wagon: I on horseback. The third night after leaving home, we camped a little east of Spain's Stand. The next morning just as we were leaving camp a horseman passed by, going in the same direction that we were traveling. I remarked that I would ride on, overtake him and have company. Presently I rode up along side of him, and, after passing the usual compliments, we jogged on together. I now had a companion for the day through the wild wilderness and it was not unnatural than I should [s]can him closely. He was riding a bob tailed bay horse, rather on a pony order; had a large pair of saddle bags, packed to their upmost capacity, wore a wide brimmed black hat, a suit of summer clothing, a sack coat or gown that fitted very loosely with large sleeves, the corners of the sack coat were tied together in front. Under that wide brimmed hat was a beautiful pair of eyes and the handsomest face that I ever saw on a young man's shoulders. A delicate hand in a fine kid glove handed the reins. The complexion was smooth "Scarce did the rosy cheek, the down invest."

I decided that I was in the presence of no common snoch, and governed myself accordingly. I flattered myself as I was barely out of my teens that I would have a pleasant time of it, with the handsome young fellow, but I was somewhat doomed to disappointment. My companion was courteous but distant, reserved and reticent, and let me do the talking, and except when hard pressed said nothing. I did however manage to find out that he was from Conecuh county, Alabama and was bound for Twiggs county, Georgia. About two o'clock p.m. brought us to Flint river. I rode down into the water's edge and halloed for the ferryman, who was on the opposite side.

Sometime was spent in bringing the flat over. Meanwhile my company that I had left in the morning came up. Just as my flat was landing I looked back and a handsomely dressed lady came walking down to the river, wearing the unmistakable broad brimmed hat, and leading the identical bobtail bay that I had been riding by the side of all the morning. I looked at her in amazement, but said nothing. We crossed the river, remounted our horses and moved off under a new order of things; stopped at Henry Crowell's at Fort Lawrence, got dinner, and rode on for the evening. Impudence or curiosity prompted me to enquire what all this meant, and she explained it all frankly and satisfactorily. She had good reasons for what she was doing, but I will not repeat them here. At any rate, that was a bold ride for such a beauty to make through the wild wilderness among the savages alone; and I have never forgotten it.

Editors Make War, Southern Newspapers in the Secession Crisis, By Donald E. Reynolds (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1970. Pp. xi, 304. \$10.00).

This is the first book-length study of the role of the Southern press during the Secession crisis of 1860-1861, and it is both a competent specimen of historical research and a highly readable little volume. Basing its subject matter on his doctoral dissertation, accepted at Tulane University in 1966, the author, an Associate Professor of History at East Texas State University, has consulted partial or complete holdings of nearly two hundred newspapers, roughly twenty-five per cent of the total number in the eleven states of the Southern Confederacy in 1860. Whereas in Professor Dwight Dumond's collection of Southern editorials on Secession Dumond used not more than thirty different newspapers, mainly published in larger towns and cities, Professor Reynolds has based his conclusions on a generous sampling of rural weeklies as well as of the larger daily newspapers. Also he has concentrated mainly upon editorial content.

In dealing with the Southern press, Reynolds distinguishes

at the outset among secessionist, radical Southern-rights, moderate Southern-rights, and unionist newspapers. The fluidity of these classifications becomes obvious as newspaper opinion in the Confederate states fluctuated from a generally unionist position in early 1860 to a predominantly secessionist viewpoint a year later. By early 1860, a large segment of the Southern press (how large proportionately Reynolds does not indicate) had gone on record unequivocally as favoring secession if the Republican party won the presidency.

Following the conclusion of the national conventions, virtually all the secessionist and radical Southern-rights papers, as well as many moderate Southern-rights papers, aligned themselves with the Southern Democratic presidential candidate, John C. Breckenridge. Although the press that supported his opponent, John Bell, the more moderate Constitutional Union party candidate, included some 200 well-distributed Southern newspapers, the Breckenridge journals substantially outnumbered the Bell papers in every Southern state except Tennessee. The Northern Democratic candidate, Senator Stephen A. Douglas, ran a weak third in the South in the race for newspaper support.

Until late in the campaign of 1860, Southern editors gave little space to Lincoln and his party, rating him an almost certain loser. But the dream of Lincoln's defeat in the minds of Southern editors was dissipated by the outcome of the October state elections in a number of key Northern states. At that point those editors faced the question as to whether the Southern states should secede upon Lincoln's mere election or wait for some overt act of aggression on his part.

Yet Southern unionist editors fought hard to combat the tide of emotionalism that set in after Lincoln was elected. Generally speaking, the moderate Breckenridge papers succumbed to Secession fever first, than the Douglas papers, and finally the Bell journals. Among the bitterenders were the *True Delta*, *Picayune*, and *Bee* of New Orleans. One of the most unyielding newspaper critics of the Confederacy was John Maginnis of the *True Delta*, who showed contempt for the new Southern government even before it was born and denounced the

"treason" of the Louisiana secession convention almost two months after it had voted the state out of the Union. Even after receipt of the news of the fall of Fort Sumter, a few Southern unionist papers blamed the Confederates for the outbreak of war.

Professor Reynolds believes that Southern newspapers may well have reflected public opinion on political issues more than they created it, but does not absolve Southern Journalism of its share of the blame for the most fateful step that the South ever took. Of particular interest to this reviewer was the chapter entitled "By the Light of the Texas Flames," in which the contribution of the press to what Reynolds regards as "one of the greatest witch hunts in American History" is assessed.

In dealing with a subject as controversial as this, the author could hardly keep from voicing some opinions that are at least arguable. Were, for example, other forms of communication—the book trade, private correspondence, the pulpit, and stump speaking—as relatively unimportant mechanisms for "firing the Southern heart" as Reynolds seems to think? Is the term "pitifully inept oration" that is used to characterize President Buchanan's December 3, 1860 message to Congress (p. 158) entirely fair to Buchanan in the light of General Scott's disclosure of the weak defense capabilities of the Southern forces and in view of the flaw in the constitutional structure that Buchanan was powerless to remedy. Also this reviewer finds it difficult to believe that the reliance of most Southern newspapers on their newspaper exchanges for news is adequate justification for concluding that news reporting was unimportant in reflecting a paper's political attitudes (p. ix).

These objections notwithstanding, *Editors Make War* is a useful exploration of editorial attitudes, which provides a satisfactory working model for additional studies of press opinion in the era of Civil War and Reconstruction.

J. Cutler Andrews

Chatham College

From Thurmond to Wallace; Political Tendencies in Georgia, 1948-1968. By Numan V. Baartley, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970. Pp. vii, 109, list of tables, index \$6.95.)

Observers of the contemporary Southern political scene will do well to devote a few hours to this slim volume by Professor Bartley. With clarity and conciseness, and without letting his methodology intrude on his meaning, the author analyzes voting trends in Georgia since 1948.

Bartley examines the thesis, advanced by V. O. Key, Alexander Heard, and others, that higher voting levels among blacks and lower income whites would produce a liberalization of Southern politics as these groups transcended racial barriers and voted together on economic issues. The work amply demonstrates that this realignment has not occurred, despite increases in registration and despite the emergence of a two party system in the state. With pessimistic view the author concludes that "the best that can be hoped is that Georgia politics will not become substantially more conservative than it has been in the past." The recent 1970 elections in the state may constitute further confirmation of this position, although they offer scant evidence of consistent Republican strength.

Professor Bartley puts no time limit on his enduring conservatism and it may be well to wonder if Key was wrong on anything but timing. The ingredients for neo-Populism still exist. If lower income whites have been the staunchest supporters of Southern conservatives, they also tend, as Bartley observes, "to be anti-establishment and to express disparaging views concerning the honesty and character of the politicians." This attitude is certainly not enough to transcend race, nor will an increase in black militancy make alignment on economic bases easier. But a variety of the activist black existed prior to Populism and the poor white may have been equally conservative in 1876. At least it is safe to vote with Professor Bartley that "Southern politics is passing through a period of profound transformation."

Robert David Ward

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The Early Jews of New Orleans (American Jewish Communal Histories No. 5). By Bertram Wallace Korn. (Waltham, Mass.: The American Jewish Historical Society, 1969. illus. notes. index. 382 pp. \$12.50.)

A distinguished record of research and publication in Jewish and ante-bellum Southern history lies behind this remarkable study of the founders of the Jewish community in New Orleans. The unique familial, mercantile, and religious ties of international Jewry provided Rabbi Korn with a body of material of exceptional richness for the late 18th century, and the archives of early 19th century New Orleans (not to mention the unchanging attractions of that fair city) literally "ambushed" him into writing this fascinating narrative of personal adventure, endurance, and accomplishment.

The history of the Jews in Louisiana begins with the career of Isaac Monsanto and his family. The elder Monsanto was born at The Hague, came to the New World by way of Curacao, and settled in New Orleans about 1757. During the next ten years the name Monsanto became familiar to all the European colonists along the Gulf Coast. Isaac prospered under the French regime, assisted the British in their efforts to open communications up the Mississippi River, and had become the leading international businessman of the region when General Alejandro O'Reilly brought Spanish authority and bigotry to Louisiana. Yet, as Korn makes clear, it was rather Monsanto's financial preeminence that his religion which led to his expulsion from New Orleans along with British merchants such as John Fitzpatrick.

In the early 1770's, the Monsanto made Manchac their base of operations and established themselves in Pointe Coupee and Pensacola. The earliest Jewish residents of Mobile also possessed New Orleans connections. The merchants Joseph de Palacios, Samuel Israel and Alexander Solomons were supplying Major Robert Farmar with the necessities of life as early as 1764, and Alexander's brother, Haym Solomons, remained in West Florida until it fell to Don Bernardo de Galvez in 1781.

The mercantile services of these venturesome entrepreneurs were critical to the feeble economic life of the Gulf Coast in

the colonial period, but the first Jewish settlers never prospered as did those of the early 19th century. Then New Orleans truly became that continental emporium which men had long envisioned. Fortunes were to be made by hard-working young emigrants from the northern states and from Europe. Rabbi Korn traces the successes and failures of dozens of men and women, the most notable being the famous Judah Touro whose career was nearly abbreviated by a British canon-ball on the battlefield of Chalmette. The story of their family and business relations is both fascinating and illuminating. Rather surprisingly, the tale does not disclose any significant religious activity before 1828, and not until mid-century did the Jewish spiritual community achieve a healthy stability based upon the death-bed generosity of Joseph Touro and the intellectual leadership of Gershom Kursheedt. Rabbi Korn explains the slow emergence of religious life by observing that the open society of a frontier American metropolis neither admired nor required the inward-looking communal qualities that characterized older Jewish societies. The activities and concerns of the early New Orleans Jews were essentially secular; so also was their outlook and contribution. If they possessed "an irreducible residue of Jewishness," they were, in all things, Americans first.

Rabbi Korn's meticulous research and voluminous notes will delight every scholar, and he has generously pointed the way toward many other interesting lines of investigation. His clear, straight-forward prose makes an unfamiliar subject-matter easy for any reader. *The Early Jews of New Orleans* stands as a magnificent example of the manner in which highly specialized local history, properly pursued, can contribute to the broader history of a region and the whole nation.

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Sections and Politics: Selected Essays by William B. Hesseltine. Edited by Richard N. Current. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1968. Pp. 176. \$5.00.)

This collection of essays of William B. Hesseltine has been

edited as a memorial volume by his student and colleague Richard N. Current. Certainly, the student has done well by his teacher. All collections of essays should open with a preface as fine as this one. After vividly introducing Hesseltine to any reader who did not personally know him, the editor sketches some of the attitudes and contributions of the great historian. This commentary on Hesseltine's interests and principles, his arguments with fellow historians, sets the disconnected essays into a historical context which provides a continuity so often missing in collection of this type.

The eight short pieces included in this volume are intended as a "sampling that would illustrate the range of the author's subjects and treatments over most of his career," though not necessarily the best pieces he wrote. They include one book review and seven articles, written in the period from the early 1930's to the early 1960's. The essays possess a remarkable timeless quality—any of them could have been written yesterday—and this quality is an unusual one in a discipline where revision is perpetual.

The book review of *I'll Take My Stand*, which opens the collection, is a gem, one that Southerners enamored of the "moonlight and magnolias" myth of the Old South should be force-fed. The seven articles which follow comment on many aspects of the years of the sectional controversy, Civil War, and Reconstruction: carpetbaggers in Tennessee, Confederate prisons, the end of Reconstruction, the proslavery argument, Abraham Lincoln, regions, classes and sections.

Every reader will lament that some particular essay was not included in the collection, but those selected for the volume accomplish the editor's purpose of providing a sampling reflective of the author's wide-ranging interests. Certainly, one of the more significant of the essays is "Economic Factors in the Abandonment of Reconstruction." Some of Hesseltine's generalizations so briefly stated here were thoroughly documented decades later by other eminent historians. The essay illustrates one of the more extraordinary qualities of the author as emphasized by the editor in his preface: that Hesseltine possessed exceptional abilities to arouse interest and open new

areas for future investigation.

The volume closes with a bibliography of Hesseltine's works and a list of the students who earned the doctorate under his direction. Both are further impressive testaments to his expansive interests. The list of doctoral candidates is a veritable roster of some of today's more significant historians of many periods and subjects in American history.

From introduction to appendix this collection is a fitting tribute to a remarkable individual and teacher. It is a model that future editors of volumes of this type would do well to study.

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